

## New Trails in Local Government

WHEN civilizations were built on simpler lines, the whole community could gather to discuss problems—perhaps the advisability of moving to a new region where hunting and firewood were more abundant, or going beyond the reach of a neighboring group which threatened to disturb the peace.

The wise chieftain or tribe listened carefully to the advice of huntsmen who faced the day-to-day problem of supplying meat and to those explorers who had adventurously or thoughtfully gone beyond the familiar territory which had been known to all of them since childhood.

These were the “experts” or “authorities” of their day. They have always been with us; and, just as those of an earlier day sometimes found their ideas too advanced for the crowd, so do the informed men and women of today find they are sometimes a few steps ahead and perhaps walking a bit too fast for those who follow.

Today’s huntsmen and explorers in the various fields of governmental administration will give the “tribe” the benefit of their adventures when they participate in the National Municipal League’s annual national conference on government at Rochester, November 18th, 19th, and 20th. They will help

to point the way to more bountiful hunting grounds in governmental structure, municipal finance, housing, law enforcement, citizen activity, and other fields which are as pressing to our more complicated civilization today as were the questions of plentiful game, firewood, good water, and safety to our 500-times-great grandfathers.

This is the forty-third such national conference sponsored by the National Municipal League. From previous meetings and subsequent league activities have come most of the progressive reforms which have taken place in government, particularly municipal government, in the last half century. Among the victories for which the league can take at least partial credit are those which made realities of the short ballot, council-manager form of municipal government, modern budget procedure, and centralized purchasing procedure, to mention only a few.

Great problems lie ahead. The future of unemployment relief presents a question which demands the most earnest thought which can be brought to bear. County government, the worst jungle in our complicated setup, needs more exploration and “clearing” than can be hoped for soon. There should be new model fiscal legislation and a

revised model city charter to take advantage of lessons learned from the depression.

The conference on government is open to all who have something to contribute

or something to learn. Many civic organizations will send representatives. They will, we are confident, find it very worthwhile.

A. W.

## Counting Two Million P. R. Votes

AS THIS issue of the REVIEW goes to press, one of the most interesting governmental experiments that has ever been tried in America is taking place: the counting of the P. R. vote for councilmen in New York City.

In five of the regimental armories of the city—selected because of their large size rather than to protect the ballots with bullets—the tremendous task of counting, sorting, and transferring the 2,000,000 P. R. votes that were cast in the five boroughs for the modest total of 230 candidates is proceeding. The Manhattan count is expected to take not less than two weeks.

The story is told of a member of the Irish Free State Parliament who was visiting in New York City prior to the election. Asked by a newspaper reporter how long it was before they knew the result of the P. R. count for Parliament in Ireland, he replied:

"Oh, we usually know in three or four weeks' time."

"You mean to tell me," the reporter gasped, "that it takes more than three weeks to count the votes for the Irish election?"

"Oh no, not at all," the Irish leader replied. "Only you see we work so hard campaigning that everybody takes a couple of weeks off before we count the votes!"

After all, is it so important that we know the results of an election the same night? Is it not rather of much greater importance to obtain a truly representative result?

It is an interesting sight, this central count, with scores of long clean white

tables with hundreds of pigeon holes set up in racks before which sit long lines of workers counting and sorting ballots. It might be a gigantic post office of the sort that would be required if everybody in a big city called for his mail at the general delivery window. And over on one side a complete company of neat uniformed policemen—just in case. For a gang raid on the ballots in process at the central count would be fatal to the system, and there are many who still hope for some sort of fatality.

Rumors have found their way into print that one reason the count would take as long as possible was that each canvasser receives \$10 a day, consultants \$20, directors \$30, and they didn't want the jobs to "give out" too soon. At the close of the second day, after time-keepers had been stationed at the doors of rest rooms, a number of the workers were discharged for soldiering on the job. The third day the count progressed more efficiently.

Old time politicians were frankly indignant over the difficulties placed in the way of some of their followers, particularly the one which forbade the printing of party symbols on the ballots. The confusion of large numbers of voters was evidenced by the number of blank or invalid ballots.

One voter bravely went ahead and, on the wrong side of his ballot, carefully selected as his first choice "Official Councilmanic Ballot." His second selection was "General Election." Then, in the following order, he preferred "No-

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# Saginaw Advancing under Manager Plan

First year under new  
charter brings Michi-  
gan city efficient busi-  
ness administration.

MURTON PEER

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THE biggest bean elevator in the world operates in Saginaw, Michigan. The biggest automobile company builds cars there. The biggest baking oven concern and biggest precision measuring instrument maker both center there. The state's biggest oil producers head up their work there, and the biggest beet sugar interests operate there. And before all these, the biggest lumber kingdom in America had its capital there.

But the biggest thing about the city's own business, until only months ago, was the opinion that it fell far short of measuring up, in efficiency, to the other businesses there. So big did this conviction become that there emerged in 1935 a movement to reorganize the business of furnishing municipal services in this community of 85,000 and to give to it a new plan, new directors, and new managers—all in a new spirit of gaining community welfare.

The members of the commission which worked out the new plan were a retired manufacturer, a lumber dealer, an accountant, a manufacturer, a retail grocer, an attorney, a wholesale grocer, an automobile dealer, and a foundry pattern maker. As they would in their private business operation, the group brought in technical assistance, engaging Harold D. Smith of the Michigan Municipal League.

The charter they submitted to Sagi-

naw electors in the fall of 1935 began taking on fame even before it was adopted, becoming known as the shortest, most compact municipal charter in the country. Less than seven thousand words in length, the document is phrased so directly that no provision yet has been found open to two interpretations.

Making it a definite step forward in local government is its provision for almost complete divorcement of the legislative and administrative functions. Notable, too, it was that Saginaw voters on approving the charter elected its writers as the members of the first city council to put it into effect beginning January 6, 1936.

As first councilmen under the manager plan, the group became the board of directors of the city's business, empowered to fix broad, general policies and instructed to leave to their manager<sup>1</sup> the actual application of their policies. Their manager carries absolutely centralized administrative authority and responsibility. Their mayor, elected by council from its own membership, is, as defined in the charter, "the city's chief ceremonial officer."

Beginning with the fundamental of necessary changes, the new administration worked on city finances. It wanted

<sup>1</sup>The present incumbent, appointed at the time the manager plan went into effect, is L. Perry Cookingham, formerly manager of Plymouth, Michigan.

the city's business to take in all it deserved for services and to spend no more than needed. How these factors had been overlooked is shown in several instances.

A river winds through the city. Tending the bridges were forty-two city employees, who, payroll records showed, had let ships pass for many seasons and stayed on through winters when only ice skaters passed under the bridges. Since early in 1936, after a study of actual needs, these bridges have been cared for by seven full-time employees, fourteen assistants during navigation season, and part-time aid of the nearest police scout car driver, called to manage surface traffic. The saving is \$20,000 a year.

#### "PAY-AS-WE-RESPOND" SERVICE

A check-up of fire department activities revealed that no less than \$8,000 was owed the city by six surrounding rural townships, some of whose bills were dated 1926. The "free service" was so taken for granted that even the public and press discounted the worth of doing else but forget the debt, and threatened reprisals came from debtor officials. The city stood firm and now has rural fire-fighting on a pay-as-we-respond basis, besides collecting one-fourth of the delinquency and all current bills.

Worst offenders against the city were water consumers and, of course, the collecting officials. City books in January 1936 showed \$200,000 in delinquent water accounts. This discovery by the new administrators was accompanied by swearing. They swore to banish unpaid water bills in the future and sought to collect most of the delinquencies.

For current collections, the city installed mechanical equipment and new methods of handling accounts, while vigorously driving on delinquencies. The city manager wrote all property

holders owing more than \$100 and got good response. The director of finance began requiring a percentage of a delinquency to be paid with the current bill. Bills of indigents were cancelled, but large accounts, personally approached frequently, are steadily signing agreements to pay.

There is a strict system of "three bills and you're out of water" which includes a second billing in ten days, and a final notice eleven days later that in five more days the water will be shut off—and on properties not paying it is shut off.

A further leak in outgoing finances was ragged handling of automotive equipment. Separate departments and their divisions bought, operated, and maintained their automobiles, trucks, and other vehicles. Four city garages dotted the city, all too small and inadequately equipped to handle important repair work and maintenance, forcing costly private service. Equipment was run down, having lacked proper care and systematic replacement.

#### CENTRALIZED GARAGE SERVICE

The answer suggested after a study was a central equipment bureau and garage. It supervises and controls all rolling equipment and gives storage, service, and repair facilities. Each department pays rental for its equipment, based on a cost-record system and including all operating costs, repairs, and depreciation. This has reduced equipment costs and produced more effective use of facilities.

In the new garage was built a bulk gasoline storage plant, permitting a saving of over two cents a gallon. The purchasing function is charged to a separate department now. The charter permits purchases exceeding \$2000 to be taken without bids, provided a saving can be made. The first two months the city saved \$1,200 on soda ash for its water treatment.

A stranger watching a serious Sagi-



naw fire might be amazed if firemen rolled up in taxicabs. But that is the cheapest and quickest way of bringing emergency employees in, a checkup showed. A reserve platoon of thirty costs about \$7.50, considered a bargain. Each of three taxi companies has a list, and on call will gather it. Water workers, nurses, repairmen, and others have pass cards for cab rides, making another saving, for they formerly drove their own cars, keeping them home nights and charging mileage to the city, allowing little check on use for city purposes.

#### UP-TO-DATE FINANCIAL PROCEDURE

The basic move to control income and outgo was creation of a single financial agency and modernizing procedure all down the line. This saved by reducing personnel dealing in financial matters from thirty to twenty-three, and eliminated extra seasonal help, slashing costs \$10,000 last year. Centralizing check-writing, handling claims, and similar tasks saved money, as did replacement of the system of each department keeping its own finance records with that of issuing monthly reports on appropriations to each department. Considered the most important savings, while least measurable, are those brought about by improved control of expenditures and more efficient service given the public.

Offices of controller, assessor, and treasurer were united into finance department in the charter. Water billing and bookkeeping later was moved under finance. Formerly duplicate books were kept by the treasurer and controller. Water records were cash receipts and disbursements, with the water division keeping single entry records of assets and liabilities. Three identical ledgers listing 254 accounts were kept by the controller, treasurer, and parks and cemeteries, each for perpetual cemetery care. This needless duplication was cut

away, the treasurer's records eliminated, and water records transferred. Soon, with a bookkeeping machine, one person was doing work formerly done by three.

Shifting from a cash to an accrual basis of accounting placed finances on an intelligible basis and cleared away the complexity which gave no clear-cut, easily understandable picture of city finances. The controller and treasurer were using eighty-six cash accounts, and reported only annually in full and semi-monthly the amount and place of cash on hand. This gave no inkling how much was available for corporate purposes, what belonged to other agencies, and how much was in trust—except to a person knowing what the eighty-six titles defined. These funds were chopped down to fifteen and the practice discontinued of dividing current tax dollars on a percentage basis among eighty-six funds and putting revenues other than current taxes, including delinquent collections, into a contingent fund for spending outside the budget.

Control of expenditures is now airtight. Once a department head beyond his budget could get a transfer from another balance. Such spending was not kept abreast of balances nor were amounts available. Now each purchase requisition goes through the purchasing office to the controller, who checks it with budget balances and if money is available approves it.

Business machinery now speeds city finance processes. On one of the three tax-writing machines an operator at once writes the assessment roll, tax roll, and four copies of the tax statement. Tax collections likewise have been speeded, and the public served better. Tax clerks quickly pass them out, not needing, as formerly, to check each against the tax roll for errors in transcription and computation prevalent under the hand-made system.

Water accounting, done by tearing the



stub from the bill for posting in customer's ledger accounts, was abolished. Standard billing machines do it now, with a control kept over each period. Handling was reduced from 17,000 to 6,000 by listing only second notices.

#### POLICE AND CRIME PREVENTION

Giving special duties to specially trained persons and pyramiding police responsibilities from police workers up to the city manager, a reorganization of police functions took effect last June 1st. Activities once sprawled among five units and miscellaneous employees were consolidated into four divisions of patrol, investigation, crime prevention, and records and communication. This was the city's first recognition of the need of crime prevention activities and the importance of placing practically all staff and records functions in the records and communications division.

Crime prevention workers include a supervisor, juvenile officer, and police-woman. Their duties are prevention and control of juvenile delinquency, handling of women's and girls' cases, removal of crime hazards, and coordination of community youth agencies. They try to make courts the last resort and encourage juvenile aid and crime prevention programs.

The investigation division handles detective work, control of vice and liquor, and court prosecutions. In patrol work are three platoons of uniformed officers and the traffic accident prevention bureau, the latter investigating accidents, prosecuting, studying traffic hazards and their control, issuing operators' licenses, and doing traffic education.

The close tie-up between records and radio was recognized. Records are kept of complaints, *modus operandi*, cases, identifications, stolen automobiles, arrests, traffic violations, and personnel and administrative reports. A two-way

radio system, with transmitters built by police technicians for \$115 each, gives maximum low-cost coverage with one officer operating each scout car.

Traffic accident prevention bureau officers concentrate upon offenses causing accidents at certain locations and periods. As the new traffic ordinance requires reporting of accidents, police are building a large file of accident pictures and data. This also assists engineering changes and special educational programs.

Other traffic activities include: (1) an engineering survey resulted in an angle parking ban, additional signals and fire routes, far-side bus stops in the business area, and four free public downtown parking lots for 650 cars; (2) police were trained in accident work at Northwestern University and Detroit; (3) citizen drivers' classes are operating; (4) the traffic violations bureau in the justice court enforces a uniform fine schedule, every ticket being accounted for directly to the city finance director; (5) a model traffic ordinance is in use and improved parking and traffic signs are being installed, as are new wooden black and white raised-letter street name signs in a \$20,000 installation; (6) in use are an accident investigation car equipped with first aid, sound and camera equipment, and a three-wheel motorcycle for checking overtime parking, this doing the work of four foot patrolmen.

#### MERIT SYSTEM INTRODUCED

A merit system for employees has been set up, the charter placing all but the city manager under it. The city was one of three first to use the personnel installation and operating service of the Michigan Municipal League, cooperating with Civil Service Assembly and Public Administration Service. Raises of \$60,000 resulted last year from the job classification and salary

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# Housing as a National and City Problem

The Wagner-Steagall act, although by no means adequate quantitatively, is a triumph for public housing

CYNTHIA WENTWORTH

*The American City Magazine*

FOR many years there have been sporadic eruptions on the surface of our housing difficulties, but it was not until the present decade that they began to assume volcanic proportions. Back in the glittering '20's the building industry was apparently producing houses at a normal rate in spite of the increasing frailty of their financial foundations. With the depression, the fiscal structure collapsed, and the building industry came as near to a dead stop as could be imagined. By 1934 national construction had fallen off 92 per cent from 1925, and residential building alone, 88 per cent. Needless to say, such a cessation of building with its consequent unemployment problem was cause for serious national concern. Some phases of this concern antedated the New Deal. In December 1931 there was held in Washington President Hoover's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership, to consider the problem of the provision of shelter in many of its intricate phases and relationships. The published proceedings of this conference have become a primary reference work on housing as a nation-wide problem.

Since this study was made, the acute aspect of the housing problem which is concerned with the eradication of slums and the provisions of decent new housing for families of low income has become a powerful social and political

issue. Further inquiry into existing housing conditions brought out various staggering facts. In 1934 the Department of Commerce conducted "real property inventories" in sixty-four typical cities, which showed that 18.1 per cent of all dwellings either needed major repairs or were unfit for human habitation. These figures are considered conservative by many students, who estimate that as much as one-third of all American housing, considering both urban and rural areas, is substandard. This diseased segment of society's dwelling output is on the debit side of every nation's balance sheet. Dark, dirty, airless, damp, disease-breeding homes are costly in terms of human health, morals, and general welfare, and in terms of actual dollars for the maintenance of those areas in which they cluster.

The seriousness of the housing problem is further revealed when we look for monkey wrenches in our house-producing machinery and find right away the obvious defect of an appalling discrepancy between the cost of new housing and the capacity of the wage-earning consumer to pay for such housing. Finally, the problem is thrown into still sharper relief by such catastrophic declines in building as occurred during the depression, which, coupled with the normal increase in the number of families plus an unusual increase due to a post-depression spurt in marriages and



a long-term tendency toward more family units of smaller size, produces a housing shortage. A certain amount of demolition of unfit buildings has contributed still further to this diminution of the dwelling supply.

It is this menacing shortage which has taken such drastic forms as a rent strike in Pontiac, Michigan, that has given wings to legislative action on the housing problem. In 1933, when the Public Works Administration was inaugurated, a housing division was set up for the purpose primarily of relieving the widespread unemployment in the building trades. Other so-called housing legislation was also passed in Congress at that time which was mainly concerned with strengthening home finance and contained no direct provisions assuring the construction of housing of sufficiently low rent to meet the need of the lower income groups. The housing division of the PWA, however, had real significance in this respect, and has resulted in the actual construction of some fifty large-scale housing projects in thirty-five cities, with an outright federal grant of 45 per cent of the cost and a 3 per cent federal loan of the remaining 55 per cent to be amortized in sixty years. This 45 per cent subsidy has brought some fine, new, healthful dwellings within the reach of a few thousand families who would otherwise have been forced to bring up their children in substandard dwellings. As an answer to a great need, these fifty projects are ridiculously inadequate, but as life-size exhibits of what could be done to make the famous American standard of living a reality, they are thrilling.

This federal program of public housing, although emergency in nature as an offshoot of the unemployment problem, has served as one factor in inciting various states and municipalities to local governmental recognition of the housing

problem. For the past few years we have seen state after state pass enabling acts under which local housing authorities can be set up, until the total number has now reached thirty. Only eighteen of these states have actually set up local authorities, and among those eighteen there have been great differences in the degree of activity.

#### HOUSING TO THE FORE

Nevertheless, the march has been forward, and today there is a new drum major to quicken its step, the United States housing act of 1937. For housing has also won recognition on the federal statute books. In a remarkably short time the legislators of our country have swayed to the pressure of this rapidly growing social and political movement. A few years ago only social workers talked about it. But the depression collapse of our house-producing and distributing machinery has started tenants and home owners thinking of it, building companies and real estate owners and chambers of commerce working over it, and every socially-minded citizen shouting about it. Our democratic governments have been forced to open their eyes and ears--and when they saw and heard they could not do otherwise than act.

In 1935 there were few congressmen who registered intelligence at the mention of housing, but in 1937 there were very few who were not acutely aware of its importance. In 1936 the Wagner-Ellenbogen housing bill was introduced in the Senate and the House. It passed the Senate but did not get any attention in the House, mainly because the President had not included it in his "must" legislation for that session. In February 1937 the Wagner-Steagall bill was introduced, which, after some doubts and compromises, became in August the United States housing act of 1937. The forces which pressed the passage of the bill were interestingly



revealed in the hearings before the committee on banking and currency of the House of Representatives, taking place on August 3-6, 1937. The first statement came from Mayor Fiorello H. La Guardia of New York, as president of the United States Conference of Mayors. At their annual conference the mayors had unanimously adopted a resolution asking Congress to enact housing legislation which would give the cities aid in meeting their housing problem. At the hearings, Mayor La Guardia presented a number of telegrams from mayors all over the country expressing their endorsement of the Wagner-Steagall bill.

#### THE NEW FEDERAL HOUSING ACT

Although the resultant legislation by no means answers our needs quantitatively, it is a triumph for public housing, decentralized as to construction and administration. It sets up a United States Housing Authority under a single administrator who is in turn under the general supervision of the Department of the Interior. This central authority is empowered to distribute loans, grants, and annual contributions under certain conditions to local housing authorities applying for these forms of assistance. The central authority is authorized to raise \$500,000,000 by the sale of its obligations, which will be guaranteed by the United States as to principal and interest. These funds will be loaned to the localities at  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent interest above the going federal rate for a maximum amortization period of sixty years, in the amount of \$100,000,000 during the current fiscal year and \$200,000,000 in each of the two next years, for the purpose of financing approved low-rent housing projects. Each loan is limited to 90 per cent of the cost of a project where grants or annual contributions are requested, but may reach 100 per cent where no other form of assistance is expected to

be necessary in reaching the proper low rents. Annual contributions are limited to a percentage of the cost of the project, determined by adding 1 per cent to the coupon rate of the latest long-term federal bond issue at the time of the contract with the local authority, for a maximum period of sixty years. A capital grant may not exceed 25 per cent of the project cost, but the president is authorized to make an additional 15 per cent grant to be used for labor costs. The authority may not make contracts for annual contributions beyond \$20,000,000 (\$5,000,000 the first year and \$7,500,000 on each of the two succeeding years); and not more than \$30,000,000 (\$10,000,000 a year) is authorized as capital grants.

Before a local government may receive assistance by annual contributions or capital grants, it must put something into the project out of its own pocket. It must contribute either 20 per cent of the federal annual contributions, or 20 per cent of the project cost in the case of a capital grant. In the former case, the contribution may be in cash or tax remissions, general or special, or tax exemptions, and in the latter in the form of cash, land, or the value, capitalized at the going federal rate of interest, of community facilities or services for which a charge is usually made, or tax remissions or tax exemptions.

Other conditions of federal assistance are: for every new dwelling provided, an equal number of substandard dwellings must be demolished, condemned, closed, repaired, or improved, immediately or later if there is a serious housing shortage. The average construction cost of a dwelling in any one project (excluding land, demolition, and non-dwelling facilities) must not exceed the average cost of private enterprise dwellings in the locality and must in no case exceed \$1000 a room or \$4000 a family unit in cities of under 500,000 popula-



tion, or \$1250 a room or \$5000 a family unit in cities of over 500,000 population. Not more than 10 per cent of the loans, grants, or annual contributions authorized by the act may be made in any one state; and persons eligible for the accommodations provided must be in the lowest income group, for whom private enterprise in the locality cannot provide an adequate supply of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings, and whose income does not exceed five times the rent to be paid, including utilities, or six times the rent where there are three or more minor children.

#### QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Since this new housing act depends for its functioning on the coöperation of local authorities, it is well to discuss what their qualifications must be in order to make application for federal funds. First of all, there must be a public agency—state, county, or municipal—legally authorized to engage in the development or administration of low-rent housing or slum clearance. In states lacking such legislation it is necessary that enabling acts be passed under which these public housing agencies or authorities may be set up.

Once an authority is in existence, it must be assured of the power of its governmental unit to make contributions to housing subsidies in any of the various forms mentioned under the national act, or again it cannot participate in the national housing program. Since the building and administration of housing projects under this act is a complex task involving a grave social responsibility, the importance of adequate financing of the local authority must be stressed, for competent persons and adequate equipment are necessary to a decent job and there will undoubtedly be some competition in the

production of programs worthy of federal aid.

What must be some of the factors to the preparation of a good, sound, local housing program? First of all, an authority must find out just what is low-rent housing in the area of its jurisdiction, what is the line in dollars and cents below which private enterprise cannot build. Once this line is determined, the need for public assistance can be estimated in terms of figures on shortage, overcrowding, vacancies, and dangerous and unhealthful aspects of existing housing within that rental group. As such studies are made, it would be wise to take note of good demolition or repair areas in reference to the requirements in the national act. It is not yet clear whether the demolition or repair must be in strict reference to the new project or if any demolition by building or sanitary officials or others can be counted in the amount required.

After such studies are made, the housing authority is ready to get to work on a program of the actual location and design of suitable buildings. In the location of dwellings is involved a multitude of considerations. The inconvenient arrangement of many of our cities today is the product of heedless and haphazard growth in the past. Today we see that we could achieve more beauty and create stabler values by careful planning. A housing project should be seen against a complete city pattern where business districts are located in the most appropriate areas as indicated by past changes and future trends and residential districts in proper relation to them and also in proper relation to educational and recreational centers, transportation, and shopping centers. Then preliminary plans and cost estimates might be made for the housing projects themselves in order to give some approximate idea of how the

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# County Managers and Near-Managers in North Carolina

While Durham is outstanding example of county manager plan in North Carolina, numerous other counties have, to some degree, centralized government under an administrative officer

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IN 1927 the North Carolina legislature passed enabling legislation whereby any county in the state, either on the initiative of the county board of commissioners or on petition of 10 per cent of the electors followed by a favorable referendum, might appoint a county manager. The manager might be a new officer appointed by and responsible to the board, or the duties of a manager might be delegated by the board to one of its members or to some other elected official.

This act was passed in response to a widespread demand for more centralized responsibility in county government and after a number of counties had provided for county managers through public-local acts, that is, acts passed by the legislature applicable to a single county. Prior to the passage of the general enabling act, managerships had been established in Alamance and Davidson Counties. The Alamance manager was elected as chairman of the board and manager. The Davidson manager was an appointee of the board.

The same legislature that authorized the employment of managers passed an act requiring that every county should have a county accountant. This office likewise could be a whole-time office filled by the board or the duties might be delegated to another officer, such as the register of deeds or a member of the

board. Even prior to the passage of this act a few counties had set up the office of auditor with essentially the same duties as those proposed for the county accountant. These early auditors were normally appointed by the board, though in a few cases they were popularly elected. Every county now has a chief fiscal officer who bears the title of auditor, county accountant, or both.

Since one of the principal duties proposed for a manager was the management of county finances and since this need was met by the appointment of county accountants, one of the strongest arguments for a manager was removed. Other duties proposed for the manager were to act as purchasing agent and to supervise public works, which consisted almost solely of highway construction and maintenance. The transfer of all secondary roads to the state in 1931 further reduced the need for a manager. At least, it weakened the demand for managers.

Nevertheless, since 1927 several counties have set up managers, or so-called managers. The managership has almost invariably taken one of two forms—the designation either being given to the chairman of the board or to the county accountant. Several of one type or the other have been set up and later discontinued. Of the two which were set up under local acts prior

to 1927, Alamance has continued to have a chairman-manager without interruption, but Davidson abandoned the plan in 1929. Among the counties which have had a manager of some type but have dropped the appellation, if not the office, are Cleveland, Guilford, Iredell, and Mecklenburg.

#### SIX COUNTIES WITH MANAGER

At the present time there are six counties in the state which designate an official as manager. As previously explained Alamance County has a chairman-manager. The five counties with appointive managers are Durham, Catawba, Person, Pitt, and Robeson. Of these, only the Durham County manager is recognized by the International City Managers' Association and listed in its directory. D. W. Newson has been county manager of Durham County since 1930. Since Durham is an urban county with various institutions and activities not normally found in a North Carolina county there are many managerial functions to be performed. Although Mr. Newson makes no appointments himself, thereby falling short of the manager ideal, all officials, elective as well as appointive, make regular reports to him and all departments are subject to strict budgetary control. In addition to his general administrative duties, he personally serves as tax supervisor, county accountant, auditor, and purchasing agent. He meets with the board and acts as their agent and spokesman between meetings.

In the other four instances, as well as in Durham, the manager performs the duties of tax supervisor and county accountant and has other miscellaneous duties. Not being so highly urbanized these other counties do not have as great a variety of services to perform. The power of the manager depends both on his energy and aggressiveness and on

the disposition of the board to delegate authority. It is understood that the Robeson County manager has been given considerable latitude by the board and is perhaps as much entitled to be listed with the city managers as is the manager of Durham County.

Less is known of the so-called managers in Pitt, Person, and Catawba Counties, but from what can be ascertained by inquiry the appellation of manager has no particular significance and the men holding the position in these three counties have almost identical duties with those officials in other counties who are serving both as tax supervisor and county accountant. In no less than forty-one counties the same person is serving as county accountant (or auditor) and tax supervisor and undoubtedly many of the thirty-six not called managers come as near to being managers as the five who are called managers.

#### OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICIALS

Likewise there are a number of counties in which the chairman of the board, or some other member of the board, devotes half or more of his time to the administration of county business and might quite reasonably be termed manager. This is the case, for instance, in Guilford and New Hanover Counties, and will be the case in Pender County if the commissioners exercise the authority given them in a 1937 local act to appoint one of their number as manager.

If Pender has acted since the legislature adjourned there are then seven counties in the state with managers—two being also members of the board and five being appointees of the board. There are other counties like Craven, Davidson, and Orange with strong accountants who approach the stature of managers.



There are a few slight variations of the above patterns which might be mentioned. Buncombe County (containing the city of Asheville) has three full-time commissioners, each assigned certain responsibilities but none of whom is either tax supervisor or county accountant. New Hanover has a popularly elected auditor who performs the duties of county accountant, auditor, and treasurer—an arrangement which violates all sound principles of fiscal control but which has given perfect satisfaction for many years. The county accountant is also treasurer in Hertford, Haywood, Beaufort and Polk Counties. In Jackson County one of the commissioners is tax supervisor and treasurer. In Macon and Henderson Counties one

of the commissioners is county accountant. In Randolph, Martin, and Currituck Counties the register of deeds is county accountant and in Dare County the clerk of court keeps the financial accounts.

Thus, while North Carolina has no county managers that are the strict counterpart of the city manager, it has numerous counties which have a strong fiscal officer who has introduced order and unity into county administration. If he possesses vision and initiative as well as a sense of orderliness, he can unquestionably exert great influence with the board. While it is certain that there are a few of this latter type, it appears that most of the county accountants are content to be mere bookkeepers.

### HOUSING PROBLEM

(Continued from Page 520)

federal and local subsidies are apt to run, as an indication of the practical possibilities of the proposals. After the United States Housing Authority makes clear its requirements on its application form, it will be possible and practical to work out plans in detail. Finally, the local housing agency has the important task of awakening and educating its own area to the importance of active participation under the national act. This activity will prove no small task in some sections, and the authority will have to work hard to maintain its own life blood.

Housing under the new act has put roots into the ground. But the bloom cannot yet be expected to be perfect or profuse. Yet as it grows and takes its place in the national garden, pollen will fly from it to neighboring plants and vice versa. Housing should bring new life to city planning, to zoning, to subdivision control; and these techniques should in turn be of great assistance in formulating a housing plan. There should be interaction to mutual

benefit between housing and the fields of public sanitation, health, and recreation. The relation of housing to taxation should be readily observed and "state and local authorities should consider the reduction of the rate of taxation on buildings and the corresponding increase of such rates on land in order to lower the tax burden on home owners and the occupants of low-rent houses, and to stimulate rehabilitation of blighted areas and slums," as a splendid new report of the National Resources Committee, entitled *Our Cities: Their Role in the National Economy*, points out. New standards and techniques in building and architecture should come about through constant experimentation, which should be stimulating to private building in competition.

All these factors and many others are inextricably tied up in the great industry of providing decent shelter for the inhabitants of a nation, and what could be more inspiring than to watch the sparks of public housing kindle into flaming effort every movement toward the creation of a more beautiful and abundant American life?

# Comparative Statistics and the Measurement of Efficiency

If municipal research is to be characterized by a scientific attitude what techniques and methods should it employ?

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COMPARISONS between cities have long been a favorite pastime among those who like to "point with pride" or "view with alarm." There was a time in fact when municipal reform consisted principally in classifying officials as good or bad, electing the good ones to office and throwing the others out.

But sweeping comparisons, pictures painted in blacks and whites, have little place in the municipal research of today. The student of municipal government is not much interested in the use of comparisons for the purposes of praise and blame. He is interested in the factors which make for governmental efficiency and inefficiency, and in the measures which might be taken to improve existing governmental structure. If he employs comparisons at all, it is for the light they may throw on the way in which government functions.

If municipal research is to be characterized by this scientific attitude, what techniques and what methods will it employ? To decide this, we must know first exactly what we want to accomplish. We must inquire a little more closely into the objectives of municipal administration and the nature of the appraisal process.

A city is primarily a service agency. It collects refuse, educates children, ex-

tinguishes fires, prevents crime. The first question that must be answered in appraising a city is: How *adequately* and *effectively* does it perform these services?

A second characteristic of a city government is that it is a part of the economy of the community. It requires resources for its support, and these resources are limited. In view of the limitation, it is necessary to ask not only, what is the city accomplishing, but further, is the city obtaining maximum results from available resources—that is, is the government efficient? A wealthy community may offer its citizens more services than a community with less abundant resources, but it does not necessarily follow that the administration of the former is more efficient.

These are the questions that municipal research can try to answer:

First, how effective and adequate is the city government? Is it healthy, is it safe, is it clean, are recreation facilities adequate?

Second, how *efficient* is the city government? Are funds being wisely expended? How low are unit costs for street cleaning, for book circulation?

Third, what can be done to increase efficiency? Should the health department budget be increased? Is it ad-



visible to modify personnel methods? Should refuse collection trucks be re-placed?

Having determined what it is that we are trying to accomplish, the next step in a scientific approach is to devise methods of attacking the problem. How can adequacy and efficiency be measured? How can the effects of administrative performance and methods be isolated?

#### TECHNIQUE OF MEASUREMENT

Let us consider a specific municipal function, the fire department. Its objective is the reduction of the total fire loss. The extent of this loss will be determined by a large number of factors—*natural factors*: frequency of high winds, heavy snowfall, severe cold weather, hot, dry weather, tornadoes, hurricanes and cyclones, earthquakes, and floods; *structural and occupancy factors*: exposure hazards, physical barriers, density of structures, type of building construction, roof construction, contents, and risk of occupancy; *the moral hazard*: carelessness and incendiarism; finally, the adequacy of the fire department itself.

The fire loss will be a reflection of all these influences, and if the fire department is to be studied, it must be considered an integral part of the total picture. To understand this picture, it is necessary to examine a wide variety of data.

Where is the data to be obtained? There are two possible sources: either from an examination of trends within a city over a period of years, or from an examination of data gathered from a number of cities or from different sections of the same city. That is, in our study of fire losses we might select a group of cities more or less similar in size, situation, and structure and collect data on fire losses, climate, amount of

frame construction, prevalence of wooden shingles, hazards of occupancy, and business conditions.

The statistical analysis of this data should reveal the relation of the fire loss to the most important of these factors. A study of the trends in fire losses in Boston as related to business conditions clearly demonstrated, for instance, the part which the moral hazard—incendiarism—plays in the fire problem. When these extra-administrative factors have been accounted for, it can be presumed that any remaining differences in fire losses are due, in large measure, to differences in the effectiveness of fire departments.

This, then, is the first problem in the use of comparative data for the analysis of governmental functions: to reduce results to equivalence by eliminating factors which are beyond administrative control. If this step has been satisfactorily carried out, it is not difficult to arrive at a measure of efficiency by relating the adjusted results to the cost of operation—again by correlational methods.

#### FACTORS INVOLVED IN EFFICIENCY

Now it is important to understand a situation. But it is equally important to know what can be done about it. And so, comparative statistics have a second important function in discovering the reasons for efficiency or inefficiency.

To accomplish this, we must find out what the government is doing, how much it is doing, and how it is doing it. And then we must evaluate the governmental performances and activities in terms of the previously measured results.

To understand the significance of administrative methods and performance, let us examine a little more closely the governmental process. We have

said that it is the function of the fire department to reduce fire losses. How does it perform its task? It inspects buildings to eliminate fire hazards. It carries on campaigns of education against carelessness, it fights fires, it investigates and prosecutes incendiaries. The extent to which it does each of these things can be measured.

But we can carry the analysis a step further. Of what does fire-fighting consist? A piece of apparatus must be brought to the scene of action, hose laid, water pumped and directed upon the flames, ladders raised, covers spread over goods to reduce water damage. Again, each of these activities can be measured, and in turn analyzed into its component parts.

What does laying a hose involve? The hose must be acquired and maintained. Equipment for carrying it must be acquired and maintained. The firemen must spend a certain amount of time and energy in laying it. Again we have a number of measurable activities which can be analyzed further in the same way—until finally we reach the cost of individual items of expenditures. The whole process of fire fighting can thus be translated into entries in the city's books of accounts.

The problem of efficiency can then be restated: how can these expenditures be combined in such a way as to achieve a maximum reduction in fire loss?

In the same way we could study organizational and methodological factors, except that the latter are not usually measurable in quantitative terms. We might have analyzed the fire department personnel, for instance, in terms of the methods of recruitment, their compensation, working conditions, and lines of responsibility.

The governmental process can be pictured as a pyramid. At its apex is the

accomplishment of objectives, and supporting these achievements we have successive tiers representing factors of performance, then factors of effort, until, at the base of our pyramid we finally reach the expenditures of government.

Or the mathematically-minded may see in this structure a set of equations. The first equation expresses the results of government as a function of the performance of certain activities. Further equations express these performance units as functions of less immediate performance units, the latter in terms of units of effort, and finally, effort is expressed as a function of expenditures. The problem of efficiency is to maximize results with the limitation that the sum of the expenditures is a constant.

The mathematical formulation of our problem suggests a method for attacking it. If the nature of each of these equations can be roughly determined from an examination of the data of actual measurements, then it can be determined how expenditures can best be distributed for maximum achievement. That is, we must discover how much each activity contributes to the result, and then, knowing the cost of the activities, we can combine them in the most effective manner. This again, is a problem to which statistical analysis of comparative data is applicable.

Take again, for illustration, the fire department. Suppose a number of cities have been ranked as to relative efficiency. Then we may discover, for instance, that the more efficient cities tend to spend a larger proportion of their budget on fire prevention rather than fire fighting activities—or for personnel rather than equipment. Such studies should throw light on the direction which changes in fire department organization or methods should take.



Municipal research, then, has two tasks—to appraise city government and to suggest means of improvement. Each of these tasks requires data, and comparative municipal statistics will supply much of the information that is needed. But if such statistics are to be valuable they should be used not primarily to rank or score cities, but as materials for the analysis of the factors making for efficiency or inefficiency.

### SAGINAW ADVANCING

(Continued from Page 516)

and wage schedule installed, and the first annual restudy promises adjustments in wages and hours to keep pace with industry.

Special committees, composed of department heads and other officials, on purchasing, insurance, investments, and special assessments, recommend city policies and procedures on questions arising under the titles. The purchasing committee, for instance, is composed of the city manager, purchasing agent, director of finance, and city clerk.

Saginaw's city hall family holds bi-weekly luncheons for informal discussions of staff problems and city affairs. For its educational value, practice is to have a high school civics class represented, along with the newspaper, it thus gaining background material "off the record."

The city's public relations agency is its bureau of information and complaint, a charter creation. To it citizens go with questions or complaints which are handled by the bureau directly or referred for proper disposition. Every request is followed through and a report made to the citizen.

Another means of making citizens feel their city government actually is theirs is the policy of filling every request for information. The new administration was sought by luncheon clubs, women's clubs, parent-teacher groups,

If the scientific attitude is to prevail in such research, statistics must be considered not so much a means of visiting judgment upon cities as a means of pooling their experiences in arriving at factually based principles of administration.

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EDITOR'S NOTE.—The article above is taken from an address delivered August 13, 1937, before the conference of the Governmental Research Association at Ithaca, New York.

church associations, and the like. The city manager at first took around his department heads, introduced them (many were strangers because the administration has not hesitated to go outside for competent officials) and each would speak briefly. Later the manager began taking along a "stooge" from his staff and they would put on a twenty-minute dialogue. This gives any group a graphic, interesting, and entertaining view of governmental affairs. The local press, a strong factor supporting the reorganization movement, gives wide swaths of space to these demonstrations, reaching thousands in addition to those personally contacted.

With all these accomplishments, officials insist that changes are only getting started on what was laid down as a four-year program but which may require six years. Big jobs still are to be done in many lines. One of three slum areas has been cleared away for park development. The city lacks park and recreational advantages. Aid in building up its Great Lakes port is just beginning. It has a program of up-river water supply pollution control. A sewage disposal plant is on the table. The first building code is being written into the new municipal code, itself rewritten to cull out antiquated provisions. Planning work is rising from the ashes of a city hall fire two years ago. Considering these, it appears that Saginaw's story still is in an early chapter.

# Nation-wide Highway Planning

A true picture of highway administration in its proper relation to other governmental activities to be made available through surveys covering all the states

J. T. BARTON

*Texas Highway Planning Survey*

THE state-wide highway planning surveys now being made in forty-four states<sup>1</sup> are coordinated under the technical guidance of the United States Bureau of Public Roads and constitute a gigantic research project that heralds a new and enlightened era of highway administration. The need for comprehensive highway planning has been evident for some time. The immediate reason for the beginning of this work on a nation-wide scale, however, was the urgent demand for information necessary in the selection of a federal aid system of secondary or feeder roads.

After Congress in the national industrial recovery act of 1933 set aside funds for improving secondary roads, state and federal officials soon realized that very little was known of the condition, comparative use, relative importance, or even the location of many of these roads. As a result of this situation, the Hayden-Cartwright act of 1934 provided that 1½ per cent of the year's allotment of federal funds to the various state highway departments might be matched with the state funds and used to finance highway planning surveys. Subsequent federal legislation has carried similar provisions.

These surveys are broad in scope and

are doing much more than supplying data necessary for the selection of a secondary road system. In fact, they are compiling information that is sorely needed in forming policies concerning our automotive transportation system as a whole—including state highways, secondary roads, and city streets. In their search for pertinent information, highway planners are concerned with all units of government. The whole structure of government is being studied in order to get a true picture of highway administration in its proper relationship to other governmental activities. Because of the nature and variety of facts sought by the highway planning surveys, persons concerned with local government should be interested in the several projects within each survey.

Although safety studies have been outlined for the near future, the three major organizational divisions of the various state surveys at present are (1) the rural road inventory, (2) the traffic survey, and (3) the financial survey.

The rural road inventory division is measuring and charting the directions of all county roads and state highways. Supplementary information is being collected concerning the types and conditions of road surfaces, the dimensions and states of repair of bridges, underpasses and overpasses, the location along each road and highway of all man-

<sup>1</sup>Highway planning surveys have not yet been started in Connecticut, Delaware, Mississippi, and New York.



made developments likely to affect traffic (for example, houses, schools, factories, churches, cemeteries, etc.). Special measurements are being made of railway crossings. In addition, a study is being made of sight distance and curvature on state highways. From the data collected, several series of highly detailed road maps are being prepared of forty-four states and of each county in these states. Thus, there will be available for the first time a set of maps showing the entire road system. Plans are now being made to bring these maps up to date periodically.

The work of the traffic survey consists in counting and classifying the various types of vehicles that use state highways and county roads. The traffic count on state highways operates continuously for a full year and is made by men who work at a number of different key stations according to prearranged schedules. These schedules provide for each station to be worked, from time to time, on different days of the week and at different hours of the day and night. The hourly, daily, and seasonal variations of total traffic are determined by automatic traffic recorders which are operated continuously at especially significant points on both state highways and county roads. One eight-hour count is made at each of a great number of places on county roads, and repeat counts are made at a smaller number of more important points. The twenty-four-hour average of the flow of traffic at all stations is being estimated from factors developed from information obtained at key stations and by automatic traffic recorders. Data from the various stations are also being arranged to show daily, seasonal, and secular variations. Special attention is being directed to the use of state highways by trucks and buses; crews of men operate for a year on schedules like those mentioned above

and weigh and measure commercial motor vehicles and get information concerning loading practices. In addition, these crews obtain origin and destination data by interviewing truck drivers and distributing postcard questionnaires to drivers of passenger cars. This same information is also being obtained by men who count traffic on county roads where cars can be stopped conveniently. From the mass of data collected, state-wide and nation-wide traffic flow maps are being prepared. These maps and their accompanying statistical tables will play a leading role in the formulation of future highway policies.

The financial survey is made up of four projects: (1) the fiscal study, (2) the motor vehicle allocation project, (3) the road use study, and (4) the road life study. In some states one or more of these projects, most often the last two named, are given a separate status in the organization,<sup>2</sup> but usually all four are considered branches of the financial survey. In any event, each project is worthy of individual consideration.

The work of the fiscal study is to provide a statement of receipts, disbursements, and indebtedness for each state and all its counties, municipalities, and other governmental jurisdictions such as townships and special districts. (In many states this will be the first complete compilation of such data ever made.) The analysis of this information is designed to show the proportions of all public receipts, expenditures, and indebtedness that have to do with highways, roads, and streets. Particular attention is being given to the taxes paid by urban as opposed to rural residents and to the governmental expenditures made for the benefit of each group. Total highway resources are being studied in order to discover the econo-

<sup>2</sup>In Texas, for example, the road life study is given a separate status.

mic limitations that should be imposed on a program of highway construction and maintenance.

The motor vehicle allocation project is using questionnaire postcards to ascertain the number of motor vehicles owned in rural areas and in each of eleven different population groups of incorporated cities and villages. From the data collected gasoline tax receipts are being classified according to the amounts paid in rural areas and in each of the population groups.

The road use study is designed to make a breakdown of total vehicle miles into the proportions traveled by rural and urban residents (classified according to population groups) on each of the various road systems. This information is being collected on detailed questionnaires which request the routes followed during a year's driving. In some states the field work is being done by trained personal interviewers, and in others it is being done by high school students who are taught by field instructors how to interview their parents or friends. The road use study is furnishing the first reliable information concerning the relative use of state highways, city streets, county roads, and the roads of special jurisdictions such as townships. When combined with information from the fiscal study and motor vehicle allocation project, it will also show the relationships between the use of the several road systems by the various classes of car owners and the highway taxes paid by these classes.

The road life study is concerned with the various types of road surfaces and bridges used on the state highway systems. All construction contracts are being analyzed in order to determine costs and dates of construction and types,

dimensions, and design features. This information is being supplemented with the dates of retirement and the reasons for retirement of the various types of road surfaces and bridges. In addition, maintenance studies are being made in order to arrive at annual average costs for the upkeep of different classes of construction. The information compiled by this study should be of great practical value in planning future construction programs.

The information collected by each division of the various statewide highway planning surveys bears important relationships to the information collected by the other divisions. In fact, the highway planning survey in each state is made up of interdependent projects. These projects have as their mutual objective the bringing together for the first time of a mass of much needed information in usable form. That the information will actually be used has already been proved in several states where the field work has been largely completed and where the surveys have advanced to the analysis stage. The Bureau of Public Roads is arranging to use the information on a national scale as soon as the various state organizations submit their data.

Construction cost, maintenance expense, the rising price of right-of-way, the demand for improvement of existing highways, the growing importance of secondary or feeder roads, the acuteness of traffic congestion in metropolitan areas, the need for elimination of traffic hazards, and the growing dependence of the public on motor vehicles for both passenger and freight transportation combine their myriad influences to make the cost of rational highway planning much less than the cost of *replanning, relocating, and reconstructing.*



# Six Years of Managership in Arlington County, Virginia

Reduced water rates,  
low insurance rates,  
and efficient financial  
procedure among the  
advantages enjoyed  
by Virginia's smallest  
county under its new  
form of government

CEDRIC LARSON

Library of Congress

JUST south of the District of Columbia, across the Potomac, lies Arlington County, Virginia, which since the beginning of 1932 has served as a laboratory of county managership. With nearly six years of trial of this plan to its credit, it is fitting that an examination and appraisal be made of the workability of this type of county government.

Arlington County, Virginia, is the smallest of that commonwealth's one hundred counties. Its area is only about twenty-five square miles. When the District of Columbia was constituted nearly a century and a half ago, it was laid out in the form of a square with the Potomac flowing through the middle. Each boundary line was ten miles long, giving the district an area of one hundred square miles. Arlington County was once a part of this area, but about fifteen years prior to the outbreak of the "war between the states" the national government ceded it back to Virginia as there had been some dissatisfaction manifested at the erection of all the executive, legislative, judicial, and departmental buildings on the Maryland side of the Potomac. The area returned was known as Alexandria County until 1920, after which it was renamed Arlington County.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>An excellent picture-story of Arlington is contained in "Virginia's Fastest Growing County," by Oliver Martin, *The Transmitter*, Washington, D. C., June, 1937.

The population of Arlington County at the time of the 1930 census was 26,615 but today this figure is reliably estimated to be about 41,000, giving a population density of approximately 1500 per square mile. Three-fourths of the inhabitants are employed in the federal government. Four traffic bridges, including the famous Lincoln Memorial and Key bridges which are the last word in modern bridge construction, span the Potomac to bring the residents of Arlington County within ten or fifteen minutes' drive of their places of work, which is generally concentrated in the buildings abutting Constitution Avenue in the capital city, the so-called "federal triangle." The Virginia County offers, then, all the earmarks of a suburban area under a county form of government.

Arlington is made up of a score of more or less contiguous communities—Clarendon (near which is situated Arlington courthouse), Lyon Park, Lyon Village, Ballston, Rosslyn, Park Lane, Cherrydale, Lee Heights, and East Falls Church—to mention but a few of the better known ones. None of these communities are incorporated towns. Also within its boundaries lie the world-famous Arlington National Cemetery, Fort Myer (an army post), the Lee-Custis mansion, a federal experimental farm, an airport, three radio stations, and a number of modern

apartment house projects, playgrounds, and parks. The county is enmeshed with a fine system of streets, highways, and roads, including portions of the picturesque Mount Vernon Memorial Highway and Lee Highway.

In 1926 the Virginia legislature took cognizance of the suburban nature of Arlington County by giving it power to install and operate civic utilities and to adopt the framework of the manager plan if desired. After much deliberation and planning, county manager government was launched on January 1, 1932.

The framework of the plan as it exists today in Arlington County is as follows:

#### THE LEGISLATIVE BODY

The voters elect a county board of five members for staggered four-year terms, and the board elects one of its members annually to act as its chairman, who is *ipso facto* "official head of the county." The board may abolish by a majority vote any other board or commission or officer in the county except the school board, the school superintendent, the trial justice, or other elective officers. In the case of the abolition of any such office, its duties may be reallocated at the will and pleasure of the board among the other offices and boards of the county.

One of the most important duties of the board is the selection of a county manager, accountable to it alone, who serves at its pleasure. This appointee need not be a resident of the county or even of the commonwealth of Virginia. The constitutional provision states:

The administrative and executive powers of the county, including the power of appointment and of all officers and employees whose appointment or election is not otherwise provided by law, are vested in an official known as the county manager, who shall be appointed by the county board at its first meeting or as

soon thereafter as practicable. He shall receive such compensation as shall be fixed by the board.

The manager's term of office expires on December 31st of each year, and he is to receive sixty days' notice in case his services are not to be renewed for the coming year. His remuneration is determined by the board and paid from county funds. The board may at any time remove him for "neglect of duty, malfeasance or misfeasance in office or incompetency." The present remuneration of the county manager is about \$7,000 plus certain expenses. Frank C. Hanrahan, who has a long record of public service behind him, is the county manager holding office at this time.

The manager has under his jurisdiction all matters pertaining to county roads and bridges, and other public work and business of the county, construction and maintenance projects, the purchase of all supplies, equipment and material, and the employment of superintendents, foremen, and labor. He appoints the following officials: county auditor, county librarian, building inspector, electrical inspector, engineer for highways, engineer for water department, engineer for sanitation (sewers), health officer, plumbing inspector, purchasing agent, refuse inspector, welfare director, shop superintendent, road superintendent, water superintendent, and all subordinate employees.

There are some eleven boards besides the county board, and their composition and duties may be succinctly outlined. The judge of the circuit court<sup>2</sup> names

<sup>2</sup>Virginia has the following provision for selection of the judge of the circuit court: "For each circuit a judge shall be chosen by the joint vote of the two houses of the general assembly for a term of eight years. He shall, when chosen, possess the same qualifications as judges of the supreme court of appeals, and during his continuance in office shall reside in the circuit of which he is judge." (Constitution of Virginia, § 96).



a three-member school trustee electoral board the members of which hold four-year terms. Their capacity is of an advisory nature largely, but they appoint the three members of the school board who hold office for a four-year term. The school board determines policies, draws up the school budget, and approves teachers and principals on the recommendation of the superintendent of schools who is named by the state board of education. The school board cannot appropriate or spend money until the county board appropriates it to them.

The duties of a finance board consist principally of hearing reports of the treasurer and advising him.

The health officer, appointed by the county manager, acts as director of health and welfare activities. An assistant selected by the commonwealth works with him (since the state furnishes 60 per cent of the funds for welfare and the county 40 per cent). A board of public welfare (six members appointed by the judge of the circuit court for a term of not longer than four years) and board of health (two ex-officio and three medical members appointed by the state health commissioner) act in an advisory and consultative rôle to the health officer and his assistant. Such activities as outdoor relief and the community chest are handled through these offices.

The electoral board (three members appointed by the judge of the circuit court for a term of four years) arranges for elections, ballot printing, and the like. An electrical board and plumbing board report and advise on matters falling within their special fields. The three members of the reassessment board are appointed by the judge of the circuit court each calendar year and their competence lies within the field of settling tax values.

The board of zoning appeals, five members appointed by the judge of the circuit court, hold public hearings for land classification, rezoning, and similar business. During the past few months there has been created in line with the new state law, an Arlington County Planning Commission, appointed by the county board to act in an advisory capacity to the county board and the county manager. The commission coöperates with the National Resources Board with its larger nationwide program and aims, and is appointed under the new state planning law.

Popularly elected are the county (police) court judge, county clerk, commissioner of revenue, commonwealth's attorney, sheriff, and treasurer. A word or two should be said concerning some of these offices.

The sheriff of the county is chosen at the polls and has a staff composed of a deputy sheriff and about twenty-five (uniformed) policemen or deputy sheriffs, equipped with motorcycles and radio cars. The treasurer and the commissioner of revenue function as state and county officials, the state paying one-third and the county two-thirds of their salaries. The commissioner of revenue makes assessments and the treasurer collects taxes and all other county money. The commonwealth's attorney is elected at large and acts as prosecuting attorney in both the county and circuit courts, as well as expert legal counsel and advisor to the county manager and the county board. The state bears half of the expense of this office.

#### CHEAPER WATER

Arlington County owns its own water distribution system, water being piped from the supply of the federal government. This utility is entirely self-supporting. Various reductions in rate have been made since the installation of

the system. The water rates may be said to reflect true savings obtainable under the county manager form of operation, a service administered entirely upon a business basis. The following data give the reductions enjoyed in domestic rates:

- 1927, February 28. Flat rate \$24.00 per annum for maximum of 40,000 gallons. Excess charge, 30 cents per thousand gallons.
- 1933, January 1. (Reduction). Flat rate \$20.00 per annum for maximum of 40,000 gallons.  
Next 20,000 gallons—30 cents per thousand gallons.  
Next 20,000 gallons—25 cents per thousand gallons.  
Over 50,000 gallons—22 cents per thousand gallons.
- 1936, July 1. (Reduction). Flat rate \$18.00 per annum for maximum of 48,000 gallons.  
Next 20,000 gallons—27 cents per thousand gallons.  
Next 20,000 gallons—22 cents per thousand gallons.  
Over 52,000 gallons—20 cents per thousand gallons.

Two twenty-inch trunk water mains, which will be able to supply a flow of about 23,000,000 gallons of water daily to Arlington County, are replacing the present trans-Potomac pipes, which have a capacity of only about 5,000,000 gallons daily. The increased supply will of course come from the same source.

A new sewer system costing close to three million dollars was recently completed. This comprises several miles of trunk and lateral sewers, as well as a sewage disposal plant (the first and only one of its kind in the commonwealth today), which latter unit cost about \$250,000.

The chief of the Arlington volunteer fire department is named by the county manager, and there are eight companies which operate on an annual budget of below \$50,000. There are about twenty

pieces of apparatus, including pumpers, hook and ladder truck, rescue squad wagon, and an ambulance. The fire chief coöperates with the state fire marshal in fire prevention and general safety measures. The equipment and service given places Arlington on lower insurance rates than many large cities enjoy.

Although the county has appreciated library facilities for many years, a newly inaugurated system has been put into effect during the past few months which centralizes control and thereby results in better coördination of effort. The chief librarian is named by the county manager. This librarian maintains a centrally located office and supervises a half-dozen branches scattered at focal points throughout the county.

#### FINANCIAL IMPROVEMENTS

The fiscal, and perhaps most important, side of county managership now remains to be examined. Each year the manager must make and submit to the board by March 15th a tentative budget in accordance with the law governing county budgets. This must show in detail all the recommended expenditures, including those for roads, bridges, or other similar purposes. Prior to April 30th the county board may alter, amend, or change any item in the proposed budget but if no change is made by that date, it is considered as being in full force and effect thereafter. After April 30th changes in the budget can be made only upon recommendation of the county manager and approval of the board, but in no case can the range of such reallocation of funds exceed 10 per cent.

The 1937-38 budget, including water system and education, amounts to something over \$1,400,000. The budget for the year ending June 30, 1937, was \$1,313,571 for all purposes, of which



sum \$439,500 was for schools and \$242,460 for water: excluding these two services, the general budget was \$631,611.

Shortly after the manager plan was introduced, serious defalcations of county funds were unearthed, amounting to about \$750,000, in a county whose annual budget averages under a million and a half dollars. Because of these defalcations the report of the auditor of public accounts of the commonwealth of Virginia shows that on July 1, 1932, Arlington had a deficit of \$358,750, but one year later a surplus of \$50,213 was shown. About half of the moneys in defalcation were recovered through the bonding companies. Figures for 1934 and 1935 exhibited increases of surpluses in the balance figures of \$60,521 and \$173,696 respectively at the close of the fiscal year—surely a tribute to the business-like operation of the manager plan.

#### CONTROL OF FINANCES

Arlington County has installed an efficient accounting and cost control system, by means of which detailed information regarding the financial condition of any department or enterprise of the county is available to any taxpayer at a moment's notice. Within the past few weeks the practice has been followed of adopting a daily budgetary control whereby a trial balance is struck every day at 4.30 p. m., showing all obligations, whether paid or unpaid, or commitments against each appropriation which is broken down to its various subheadings. This daily budgetary control is a check and safeguard against the leakage, misappropriation, or embezzlement of public moneys. In addition to this, there is an engineer who tabulates through uniform cost accounting progress and production on all county jobs and contracts from beginning to end by means of a "daily yard-

stick" calculated for each individual piece of work. A quarterly check is also made against engineering projects and public services to watch the inflow of receipts and taxes as compared with expenditures.

The county enjoys a uniform tax levy which is set for Arlington as a whole by the board, hence there is no overlapping of tax districts or "crazy-quilt" of *ad-hoc* authorities within the county.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1936, the assessed value of real property in the county was \$21,745,800 with the estimated true value at \$54,364,500, the comparative figures for personal property at the same time were \$3,008,231 and \$7,520,578, and for public service corporations \$1,707,652 and \$4,269,130, or a total assessed value of \$26,461,683 against an estimated true value of \$66,154,208—a rate of about 40 per cent of total assessed value to total true value. The total assessment for 1937-38 is about \$33,192,042 or a per capita of about \$809. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1936, the per capita tax expenditure was \$23.52 after water department, miscellaneous revenue, and moneys from the state had been deducted. In the "Report of the County Auditor: Year Ended June 30, 1936," appears a table giving the assessed value and estimated true value of all taxable property from 1931 to 1936 inclusive. Figures in every case for real property, personal property, and public service corporations show a "ratio of total assessed value to total true value" of 40 per cent—which reveals a very low rate for Arlington in contrast with comparable areas or cities of its size.

A word should be said about comparison of Arlington with other counties of Virginia financially. The latest comparative figures published by the auditor

of public accounts is for the year ending June 30, 1935, covering the one hundred counties of the commonwealth. In that year Arlington derived 85.02 per cent of its total revenue from local sources, against the average of one hundred counties of 67.16 per cent. Virginia's supplement for the year was 14.88 per cent or \$152,800 for Arlington County, whereas the mean was 31.05 per cent; the federal contribution was one-tenth of one per cent or only \$1,000 as compared to an average federal supplement of 1.79 per cent (only twenty-seven Virginia counties received any federal aid during this particular year.

The average per capita for total expenditures and other charges for the year ending June 30, 1937, reveals a figure of \$35.59 (on the basis of 1930 population figures) or less than 10 cents per day per person for the cost of government in Arlington County. The per capita for the commonwealth for the same period was \$12.06. This seemingly large difference is somewhat artificial and statistical, as may be readily seen by the several offsetting and compensating reasons which account for the higher rate. The huge deficit of moneys experienced through speculation mentioned previously amounted close to \$400,000 even after bonding companies had made good their bonds on public officials, and this had to be met out of taxes. Arlington is an urban community and enjoys many services, such as free garbage collection and trash disposal, which other Virginia counties do not have. The complexion of the population of Virginia as a whole tends to be rural in nature and distributed over a large area. Again, the percentage of the negro population in Arlington is small, being about 10 per cent, which makes the average standard of living high, and this is reflected in a higher tax rate. The Virginia auditor

of public accounts, further, still uses the 1930 census as a basis for computation of the per capita costs and the county has increased its population from 26,615 in 1930 to about 41,000 at present, a fact which would sharply lower the true per capita expense, which may more reliably be placed at the above-cited figure of \$23.52 after deducting the self-supporting water expenditures, miscellaneous revenue, and state allocations.

#### TAX RATE COMPARISONS

Additional light is shed upon the tax situation in Arlington County in some data and figures of the commissioner of revenue of the county, Hon. Harry K. Green.<sup>3</sup> The county tax rate is \$2.70 on \$100 valuation and the assessed valuation is approximately 40 per cent of the market value. If the tax rate were levied on the true market value, the rate would be reduced to \$1.10 per hundred. The comparative rate on District of Columbia real estate where there exists full market value assessment is \$1.75 on the hundred for 1937-1938 (an increase of \$0.25 over 1936-1937 when the rate was \$1.50 per hundred). Thus a \$20,000 home in the District of Columbia with a rate of \$1.75 would be taxed at \$350. A \$20,000 home in Arlington assessed at 40 per cent or \$8,000 would be taxed at \$216, or a saving of \$134. Montgomery County, Maryland, which borders on the District of Columbia and is a suburban area, has a rate of about \$2.33 on the hundred (a figure which excludes certain special assessments in the metropolitan area), and the assessed valuation of this county is about 70 per cent of the market value. Property valued at \$20,000 in Montgomery County would be taxed at the rate of \$2.33 per hundred (leaving out special assessments) or \$326.20—

<sup>3</sup>The *Arlington Courier*, Arlington, Va., September 16, 1937, p. 4, 6, 8.



\$110.20 above the Arlington figure. Montgomery County furthermore seems to be plagued by continual financial troubles, and authorities are investigating at present alleged shortages and irregularities in public moneys, while Arlington, by contrast, can tell at the close of any day just how every account stands.

Since 1933 Arlington County has experienced "boom" years. During the past several years the building permits have run about \$15,000,000. In 1936 about seven hundred homes were erected in the county and the record for 1937 will considerably eclipse this figure. Modern apartment houses, not over three stories high, are being built on a large scale, with adjacent playground facilities, park areas, and spacious lawns.

Frank C. Hanrahan, Arlington County manager, has just engaged several experts to make a survey of the county's power situation, which apparently presents a vexing problem. Two power companies at present serve the county. The Braddock Light and Power Company supplies about one-eighth of the county with electricity (the Rosslyn district nearest the capital city) and it charges the same moderate rates as are in effect in the District of Columbia as it is a subsidiary of the corporation which serves Washington. The Virginia Public Service Company supplies the electrical needs of the other seven-eighths of the county and its rates are generally about 30 per cent higher.

This situation has produced dissatisfaction among users, who feel that the rates ought to be uniform. The survey will consider the advisability of the county building a plant and a distributing system of its own, or procuring all power from Washington, limiting operations to one company, or similar steps, with the proper consent of state power authorities.

Arlington may be said to be one of the pioneer counties in the United States in the field of county managership. At present Henrico and Albemarle are the only other counties in the commonwealth of Virginia which are experimenting with the plan. The apathy in adopting this more enlightened form of county government is probably traceable to a lack of an understanding, by the majority of the citizens of Virginia, of what county managership means, also the failure of county leaders to take the initiative in introducing this form of government, together with the traditional indifference of citizens to local government.

If, however, the success with which progressive counties such as Arlington are meeting can be publicized sufficiently, it may have the effect of securing the adoption of the county manager system not only in Virginia but in other states as well on a much wider scale.

NOTE—The writer wishes to thank Roy S. Braden, Arlington County manager 1932-36, at present community manager at Greenbelt (Berwyn), Maryland, and Frank C. Hanrahan, incumbent Arlington County manager, for cooperation in the preparation of this study.

## NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GOVERNMENT

November 17-20, 1937—Hotel Seneca, Rochester, New York

*Topics to be discussed* include reorganization of county government, manager government, municipal finance, metropolitan areas, tax limitation, citizen organization, proportional representation, law enforcement, housing, planning, and zoning.

## NATIONAL MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

309 EAST 34th STREET

NEW YORK CITY

# Minority's Right to Live

*From Editorial in the Saturday Evening Post*

NEW YORK CITY will have an election under its new charter in November, when it will choose, along with a mayor and several borough presidents, a municipal council by proportional representation. The chief reason why New York has adopted proportional voting is that in its present board of aldermen, soon to disappear, there are sixty-two Democrats and three Republicans. Now, the Republican voter is getting to be a rare animal and is regarded by some as approaching extinction, but he is not altogether lost to the naked eye.

By party enrollment there is still one Republican for every five Democrats in New York City. In the last gubernatorial election, there was one Republican vote for every two Democratic votes. In alliance with independent Democrats and other independents, the Republicans were strong enough to elect the present mayor of New York and three out of the five borough presidents.

But in the lower house of the city legislature, the Republicans are just a chemical trace. Such a minority is worse than being ineffective. It is not even vocal. It becomes derisory. It

conveys the impression that all the Republicans in New York are dead. Actually, there are at least 300,000 last-ditch Republicans in the big city.

New York has adopted the proportional vote because it wants a real opposition party in the city council, a minority strong enough to make a noise. Proportional representation would save a 20 per cent Republican voting strength at the polls from becoming 5 per cent in the board of aldermen. Other cases will readily occur. If last year's vote in the Electoral College had been redistributed in proportion to the popular vote, the score would not have been 523 to 8, but approximately 325 to 206, which has quite a different look. In the Senate there would have been 60 Democrats to 36 others, as against an actual 75 Democrats to 21 others. In the House there would have been 270 Democrats instead of 335 Democrats. We should have heard of majorities of 100, at most, instead of 200 and more. Proportional representation does, in theory, address a reminder to majority and minority. It warns against undue pride and undue despair. Proportional representation inculcates a sense of proportion.

**President Dykstra of Wisconsin on the Manager Plan.**—The Chicago City Club *Bulletin* of October 18th contains an interesting account of an address on the manager plan by Clarence A. Dykstra, president of the University of Wisconsin. We quote the following excerpts:

"I am for operation in municipal affairs, and not for exploitation," said Mr. Dykstra.

Answering the argument that a city the size of Chicago was too large to be administered by one man, Mr. Dykstra cited the position of the President of the United States and the executives of our huge business and financial institutions. The city manager plan is merely an application of "typical business organization and common sense."

"Some say that the city manager form

is un-American," said Mr. Dykstra. "What is meant by un-American? A thing is un-American because we did not have it a century ago. Plumbing is un-American because George Washington did not have a bathtub! Typewriters are un-American because our fore-fathers didn't have them. We are continually being tricked by slogans."

The secret of the success of the city manager plan, he asserted, is that it establishes an organization to provide personnel capable of getting done what must be done in a community business venture.

"Until Americans think of their local government as an operative business organization to take care of community needs we will get nowhere."





## RECENT NEWS REVIEWED

### NOTES AND EVENTS

*Edited by H. M. Olmsted*

#### **Council Manager Plan Developments.—**

In Santa Monica, California, a committee is drafting a manager charter.

In San Diego County, California, the County Development Association is advocating the county manager plan.

It is expected that Winnipeg, Manitoba, will vote on the adoption of the manager plan late in November.

The Indiana Junior Chamber of Commerce has adopted as one of its major aims the securing of legislation to enable cities in that state to adopt the manager plan.

In Superior, Wisconsin, the local branch of the coal dock workers' union voted late in September, sixty to one, to instruct the executive committee to take steps to circulate petitions for an election on the adoption of the council manager plan.

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#### **Conference on Educational Broadcast-**

**ing.**—The second national conference on educational broadcasting, to be held at the Drake Hotel in Chicago, November 29th to December 1st, will hear spokesmen for the radio audience, the radio industry, and education, and will present exhibits of accomplishments in educational broadcasting, and also technical exhibits. Representatives of the Federal Radio Education Committee, the Federal Communications Commission, and the Office of Education Radio Project will report on government activity. The conference is open to the public and will include talks on assigned topics, general discussion, and questioning of speakers.

#### **Planning Research Station Established**

**at Buffalo.**—The University of Buffalo and the Buffalo City Planning Association are jointly sponsoring a planning research station, which is intended to undertake projects of value both as contributions to the civic development of Buffalo and its environs and as material for research and for training graduate students. It is said to be the first organization of its kind in this country.

The station is under an executive committee headed by Chancellor Samuel P. Capen of the university and including three members named by Chancellor Capen and three named by Mr. Fenton M. Parke, president of the Buffalo City Planning Association. Its technical director is Dr. Walter Curt Behrendt, former consultant on housing, planning, and building for the Prussian ministries of finance and public health and recently lecturer on city planning, housing, and regional development at Dartmouth College. Dr. Behrendt is now professor of city planning and housing at the University of Buffalo and technical director for the Buffalo City Planning Association. The station is assisted by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.

The operative staff of the station will include junior internes who will be students in social and public administration at the university, and senior internes who will be graduates of accredited schools of architecture, engineering, and related technical subjects.

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#### **American Municipal Association Con-**

**vention.**—The fourteenth annual convention of the American Municipal Association, held in Chicago October 13th to 15th, was attended by over two hundred people, including representatives of the forty state leagues of municipalities of which the association is a federation. The chief topics discussed

were municipal finance, public personnel administration, and municipal airports. At the annual banquet the National Resources Committee's report on *Our Cities—Their Role in the National Economy* was commented on by Clarence A. Dykstra, president of the University of Wisconsin and chairman of the urbanism committee of the National Resources Committee, and by Professor Charles E. Merriam of the University of Chicago and the latter committee, who introduced the speaker.

In the discussion of municipal finance emphasis was laid on the increased dependence of cities on federal funds, and on the hampering restrictions of state legislation concerned with municipal finance.

Resolutions were adopted of the following tenor:

Opposing rigid tax limitation and homestead exemption laws;

Advocating the merit system in the public service;

Commending the United States Office of Education and the Advisory Committee on Education for their assistance in making possible the present training opportunities for public employees, urging its continuation, and offering the co-operation of the AMA and the state leagues;

Urging Congress to provide funds for an airport development program on a national long-term scale, under a federal plan similar to those for highways and waterways, with a more equitable sharing of the expense of development and operation than heretofore;

Congratulating the National Resources Committee and its urbanism committee on their report on cities and urging on Congress and the President the establishment by the federal government of a division of urban information to serve as a depository and clearing house for information now collected by governments and authoritative private agencies, and also a division of urban research to perform functions for cities similar to those now performed for rural areas by the Department of Agriculture.

Morton L. Wallerstein, executive secretary of the League of Virginia Municipalities, was elected president, and C. C. Ludwig, executive secretary of the League of Minnesota Municipalities, vice-president, for the ensuing year. Clifford W. Ham continues as executive director.

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#### **Coöperative In-service Training Pro-**

**gram in Michigan.**—The Michigan State Board of Vocational Education, the University of Michigan and the Michigan Municipal League are jointly sponsoring a program of in-service training of municipal employees. Policemen, firemen, assessors, and municipal electric plant employees are the first in order of the various groups which the program is intended to cover.

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**Larger New York State Villages Seek Home Rule.**—At a meeting of nearly one hundred representatives of New York State villages of the first class, held in New York City on October 7th at the call of the state conference of mayors, a resolution was adopted petitioning the state constitutional convention, meeting next year, to grant home rule powers to first class villages. Advantages and disadvantages of mandatory or discretionary incorporation as cities, on the part of villages of more than ten thousand population, were also discussed.

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**National Association of Housing Officials to Convene in Cleveland.**—Low-rent housing problems of American cities under programs made possible by the Wagner-Steagall housing act will be discussed at the annual conference of the National Association of Housing Officials in Cleveland, Ohio, November 18th to 20th. Members of local housing authorities will consider ways and means of discharging the many duties they will have under the new decentralized program. Representatives of state housing boards will discuss the task of supervision and education in their respective fields, and staff members of federal agencies will define administrative practices and regulations. The association, now in its fifth year, has a membership of over six hundred local and state housing officials.

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**More Education in Planning.**—The New England Town Planning Association announces a new course in "School Projects in Practical Civics" for high schools, designed to acquaint young students with the principles of town planning. The course will include work with relief maps, streets and highways, zoning, park systems, industry, parking, airports, etc. Similar study has been carried on for many years in the city of Dallas, Texas.



The traveling exhibit of the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce, to promote the visualization of city planning for the general public, was displayed in New York City for the first time in October. The exhibit features models of metropolitan centers in their present state, and some "cities of the future." Following the New York opening, the exhibit will be shown in Buffalo, Flint, Chicago, Portland, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and other cities. The exhibit will be returned to New York, according to present plans, for display at the world's fair of 1939.

Buffalo's municipal university has recently announced a "planning research station" (see separate item).

**Professional Certificates for Public Personnel Administration.**—In accordance with a resolution adopted at its recent annual conference, the Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada is to establish professional standards in public personnel administration. This is one of the first attempts of a group of public officials to impose and administer professional standards in its own field, and it may be compared to the professional standardization of physicians, engineers, architects, and other groups in private endeavor. Granting of the certification of professional competence will be in the hands of a three-member committee on professional standards set up by the assembly. This committee will establish the qualification standards for three classes of professional competence in public personnel administration—junior, associate, and fellow.

**United States Conference of Mayors to Meet in Washington.**—Mayors, city managers, councilmen, and other representatives of the 150 largest cities of the country are expected to convene in Washington, D. C., November 15th to 17th, at the annual meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors. Important sessions will be held on: (1) industrial disputes and the cities, (2) the relief program for 1938, (3) the municipal airport problem, and (4) the new federal housing measure.

Formal proposals by the cities may be looked for with regard to needed federal legislation at the next session of Congress covering relief needs, the airport problem, and

ways of carrying out the purpose and intent of the Wagner-Steagall housing act.

Mayor F. H. LaGuardia, president of the United States Conference of Mayors, will preside at the opening session on November 15th.

**Tyneside Merger Recommendations.**—An English suggestion for the logical reorganization of an illogical local arrangement is contained in the *Report of the Royal Commission on Local Government in the Tyneside Area* (March 1937, Cmd. 5402). This report is of particular importance since it deals with local government in one of the economically distressed areas of England, now included among the "special areas" in which some effort at rehabilitation is being evidenced. An earlier report, *Report of the Royal Commission on Merthyr Tydfil* (November 1935, Cmd. 5039), dealt with a similar problem in the distressed area of South Wales. In this instance the report contained the recommendation that the county borough of Merthyr Tydfil should revert to the status of a municipal borough in the county of Glamorgan. To date no action has been taken on this recommendation.

The report on the Tyneside area recommends the division of local government services into two categories: services which are preponderantly of a national character and suited to administration over larger regional areas, and those which are local in character, conferring upon the local taxpayer benefits more or less equivalent to his rate burden.

In view of the persistent growth of *ad hoc* areas in the United States (as is evidenced, for example, in the recent expansion of power districts and other areas serving groups organized for coöperative electric power distribution), it is worth noting that the commission rejects the idea of *ad hoc* authorities with different areas for different services. This is a point of view not shared by some eminent writers on English public administration. The commission proposes the creation of a Tyneside region to administer the following services: public health, education, public assistance, police, fire brigade, and highways. This regional area would comprise twelve local government areas now existing, plus parts of three others. Moreover, it is recommended that eleven of these existing local authorities, in addition to parts of three others, be consolidated into one municipal

borough,<sup>1</sup> which together with the remaining local authority, the administrative county of Northumberland, would administer the strictly local services. The consolidation of the administration of the River Tyne, under the Tyne improvement commission, is recommended, subject to a few minor exceptions. It is also noted that a *prima facie* case has been made for the creation of a passenger transport board with wide powers.

The attention of the commission seems to have been devoted rather to the spreading of adequate services than to the question of financial betterment possible through a consolidation. Some attention was devoted to the spread in local rates between various existing units in the proposed unit. It is regrettable that the report does not deal in greater detail with the financial aspects of consolidation and the instances of inadequate administration because of the present arrangement of local boundaries.

American students will not be surprised to learn that no immediate step has resulted from this report; nevertheless it is to be welcomed as a recognition of the problem and as a presentation of a definite program of action.

LEE S. GREENE

Fellow, Social Science Research  
Council, 1937-38

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**More Interstate Coöperation.**—A minimum wage compact between the eastern states of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island has been signed by representatives of all these states, has been formally ratified by several, and has been given federal sanction by a joint resolution of Congress signed by President Roosevelt. It is designed to establish uniform minimum wage laws for women and children in the signatory states. According to Henry Parkman, Jr., former Massachusetts state senator and one of the originators of the movement for interstate labor compacts, this is the first to be established by law.

<sup>1</sup>To be called Newcastle-upon-Tyne, after the existing city. Cf. footnote 1 of article, "Merge Units of Local Government in England and Wales," by John A. Fairlie, *NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW*, August 1937, p. 408.—Ed.

## COUNTY AND TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT

*Edited by Paul W. Wager*

### Board of Supervisors of Scott County, Virginia, Retains Control over Schools.

The school board and the board of supervisors of Scott County are again disputing for power over the school budget. Last year the supervisors rejected the entire budget presented by the school board. The latter was then successful in getting a writ of mandamus from the state supreme court of appeals to compel the supervisors to lay a levy for support of the schools. This year the school board, chagrined by the scaling down of the school budget by the supervisors, went a step further and in their petition for mandamus contended that the county board of supervisors have no right to increase or decrease the budget estimates submitted by the school board. The state supreme court of appeals, session September 1937, refused to accept this view, and therefore dismissed the petition which would have given the county school board control over the school levy. "We do not mean," the court said, "that the board of supervisors should be stripped of all power over the school budget and school expenses; we think they have the right, in the exercise of a reasonable discretion, to control the estimates submitted by the school board."

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### Chesterfield County, Virginia, to Vote on Executive Plan.

Encouraged by Henrico's success, Chesterfield, a semi-urban county adjoining the city of Richmond, is seeking reform in the structure of her government. For more than a year a citizen's Better Government League has been working on the matter. Recently the board of supervisors refused to call an election to vote on the proposed new government. Then the league succeeded in getting more than the required signatures to a petition requesting the circuit judge to issue an election call. On November 2, 1937, the people of the county will vote on adoption of the executive form of government, which is similar to the plan now used in Albemarle.

JAMES E. PATE

College of William and Mary



### Power District Held Invalid in Wisconsin.

Like the optional provision for the commission form of county boards, another promising advancement toward local government reform in Wisconsin has been cut short by the state supreme court. In 1931 the legislature passed the power district law which provided that two or more towns, cities, or villages might combine to buy or create a utility system. Four years later twenty-eight municipalities in Polk and Burnett Counties proposed a power district. Following the required referendum, in which seven communities voted not to join, the state public service commission approved the smaller Polk-Burnett power district, comprising the other twenty-one municipalities. This was the first use of the 1931 law. It augured well for at least some progress toward functional consolidation.

Fearing the establishment of a precedent detrimental to their own interests, privately owned utilities promptly attacked the new intercounty district in the courts, hoping that one of the three distinct plans of attack would result in the invalidation of the project. The utilities charged, among other things, that the district was not valid because the public service commission had not fulfilled its duty. According to the 1931 law there are two distinct steps to be taken by that body. First, within ninety days of the notice of the intention to form a power district the commission is to give an advisory report on the feasibility of the project. Secondly, if the referendum then held results in a reduction in the size of the district, as in this case, the commission is to "file its approval or disapproval" of the smaller district within ten days. Counsel for the utilities argued that the law required the commission to make a finding of feasibility in the second case as well as in the first, although the statute makes no reference to fact-finding except in the first instance.

On June 8, 1937, the majority of the state supreme court found the intercounty power district "has no valid existence." (*Clam River Electric Company v. Public Service Commission of Wisconsin*, 274 N. W. 140.) The decision employs substantially the same argument as that of the utility counsel. Approaching the case from the point of view of the delegation of legislative power to the commission, the two partially dissenting justices declared the power district law, and con-

sequently the district itself, invalid; but they contended that the majority "read things into" the 1931 law, inserting "feasibility" and offering definitions where the legislature had been silent.

At first glance, it would appear that consolidation of the kind contemplated could easily be provided by the compliance of the public service commission with the court's interpretation of the law. It may not be so simple, however. The majority opinion left the way open for further review of the power district law, merely observing that it "bristles with difficult, complicated legal questions." It is perhaps significant that there has been articulate sentiment in favor of changing the law, whereas there appears to have been no attempt to revive the ill-fated Polk-Burnett district or to establish similar districts elsewhere.

ELDON L. JOHNSON

University of Wisconsin

### TAXATION AND FINANCE

*Edited by Wade S. Smith*

#### Cities Turn to New Wilcox Act.—

The 1937 revision of the old municipal bankruptcy act is already appearing in the courts for interpretation, as cities left high and dry by the Supreme Court's action last year holding the first act unconstitutional turn to the new statute in an effort to complete long delayed debt readjustments. The decision of a lower court in a recent case in Florida seems to indicate that cities seeking to effect a composition of their debt under the 1937 Wilcox act must begin at the beginning. They cannot pick up their proceedings where they left off when the highest court's decision was handed down.

Chief difference between the new statute and the old is that the new assiduously avoids any semblance of dictation by the federal courts to the states. Action must be entirely voluntary, hence only the affected unit can bring the matter into court, and counties (whose status as state agencies is generally accepted as indisputable) are excluded. The old law required agreement of 75 per cent of all creditors, with a minimum of two-thirds of each class assenting. The new act requires only the assent of two-thirds of the total of those classes to be affected by the new debt composition, but it also requires that the assent of 51 per cent must

be secured before the unit seeks court intervention.

Numerous questions as to the procedure of a city which began action under the invalidated law and now seeks to take advantage of the 1937 act have arisen, with the prospect that many will have to be clarified by the courts. Fortunately the remaining situations where debt must be compromised are of less importance from the general municipal credit standpoint, although all, of course, are critical from the viewpoint of the affected unit and its bondholders. In Florida, where prospective actions under the new Wilcox act are probably most numerous, city attorneys of thirty-six cities recently met in Orlando with Representative Mark Wilcox under auspices of the Florida League of Municipalities, and only two of the thirty-six were positive that they would not seek to use the revised statute.

#### Debt Equalization for Minneapolis.—

Yielding to pressure from property-owning groups desirous of a lower tax rate, Minneapolis' board of estimate and taxation adopted in the first week of October a budget predicated on the extension of maturities on outstanding term bonds. Although the plan appears as a tax reduction expedient, there is considerable justification for the leveling out of the city's debt to secure lighter annual requirements.

Minneapolis debt service requirements reach their peak over the next few years, and were full provision made in the budget for tax-supported debt over a third of the 1938 levy would go for debt service. While Minneapolis' resources are undoubtedly adequate to carry the burden (city tax-supported debt as of July 2, 1937, was \$122 per capita, compared with a median of \$82 for comparable cities, but the total debt burden—city, plus share of debt of county and other overlapping units—was only \$126 compared with a median for the group of \$132) there are strong arguments for extending the debt. About 40 per cent of the city's serial bonds (which constitute roughly \$56,000,000 out of \$63,000,000 bonds) are scheduled to retire over the next five years—a rate nearly twice as rapid as necessary in the light of conservative standards—while the entire term debt matures before 1950. Minneapolis is thus attempting to meet a debt whose ultimate burden is moderate, but at a rate of

retirement which undoubtedly is more rapid than necessary.

For the past several years the city has levied inadequate amounts for the sinking fund for term bonds in order to lighten the total levy. The next term bond maturities fall in 1938, however, and it became necessary in fixing the 1938 budget to determine just how they would be treated. If the tax levy were raised to start replenishing the sinking fund, a tax rate of 20 mills for the purpose would be necessary beginning in 1938. This would have raised the 1938 total rate to about 106 mills, compared with 93 mills for 1937. A property owners association comprising the owners of about two hundred apartment houses threatened to organize a tax strike if the levy were substantially above the 1937 level, and the board of estimate and taxation finally decided to refund a portion of forthcoming maturities and hold the sinking fund levy at 11.4 mills for 1938, permitting a total rate of 98 mills. Subsequent lowering of state and county millages created a small leeway permitting the sinking fund levy to be raised to 11.66 mills. The total city-purpose levy is 75.07 mills, the additional millage representing state, county, and miscellaneous purposes.

Minnesota statutes now require that all municipal bonds be issued in serial form, and the Minneapolis board of estimate and taxation has followed the practice of issuing such bonds with the maturity spread over ten years. George M. Link, secretary of the board, has estimated that if all the present term bonds are refunded into ten-year serials, with the first principal payment on each refunding issue deferred three years from the date of issuance, retirement of the refunding bonds (plus the probable new capital financing during the period) will require an annual increase of three mills for the sinking fund levy, with an average rate for the eight years of approximately 21.5 mills. If no refunding bonds were issued, an annual tax of 20 mills would be sufficient, Mr. Link estimates.

The high millage rates at which taxes are levied in Minneapolis is explained in large measure by Minnesota statutes classifying property for taxation at different percentages of full value. Platted real estate is assessed at 40 per cent of full value, unplatted at 33 1-3 per cent; homesteads are given additional exemptions. The large taxable property value



of a city like Minneapolis is therefore considerably limited as far as the ad valorem property tax is concerned. As a result, the city has found it expedient to fund virtually all of its heavy welfare costs in recent years, rather than care for such charges through its tax budget. These deferred charges are now beginning to show up in the budget as debt service and make provision for the old term bonds particularly onerous without refunding.

Many cities have sought to rearrange their debt structures with less justification than has Minneapolis, but it is not unlikely that by spreading a portion of its debt over the immediate future in a more equitable manner it will find that bond buyers in the future will be inclined to demand somewhat higher interest rates to offset the fancied blot on the 'scutcheon.

The Pittsburgh graded tax plan and exemption of new industrial property from taxation was among the subjects discussed at the annual conference of the National Association of Assessing Officers, meeting in New York City, October 20th-22nd. Granting of tax exemption as an inducement for industries to locate in the city is said to be steadily increasing, despite the weight of expert opinion against such subsidies. Pittsburgh's well known graded tax plan, frequently cited as a workable approach to the single-tax principle, provides for the taxation of improvements at half the rate on land. It is said to have had a salutary effect on land usage.

Pennsylvania's forty-four third-class cities will spend \$1,668,000 more in 1937 than they did in 1936, according to the September bulletin of the state department of internal affairs. The figures are the first set of comparable statistics ever possible, and represent the first full year of operations under the state uniform budgets act, which went into effect in 1936.

Bandon, Oregon, the little city wiped out in a forest fire in the fall of 1936, recently sought federal aid in refinancing its bonded indebtedness as part of its rehabilitation program. Rebuilding of the town according to a modern "garden city" layout has been undertaken by a citizens committee, which will allocate properties in the new town on the basis of holdings in the old.

The Salt River Valley Water Users Association, vast irrigation and hydro-electric development agency chartered as a private corporation for the construction and use of the famous Roosevelt Dam project, recently incorporated as a public corporation to secure lower interest rates. First offering of \$3,000,000 bonds to take over private obligations was unsuccessful. Project centers around Phoenix, Arizona, in vast and agriculturally rich Maricopa County.

When citizens circulate petitions calling for an increase in taxes, that's news. This novel procedure has been invoked at Newport Beach, California, to obtain an increase from three to six cents for the library fund and from three to ten cents for the park fund. An acute shortage of books at the library and a greater planting of trees and shrubs in newly developed areas are advanced as sufficient reasons for the increase, according to taxpayers sponsoring the petitions.

Because the new Nassau County (New York) charter, which goes into effect January 1, 1938, provides that functions of health and welfare be taken over by the county, Oyster Bay Township, historic Long Island community, will be taxless next year. Elimination of the health and welfare items from the township budget permitted a total budget of \$210,550, according to press reports. Surplus of \$76,550 will be available from 1937, and miscellaneous revenues are estimated at \$134,000, so that no township levy need be spread.

At its meeting in Boston recently the Municipal Finance Officers' Association approved its general accounting committee's report, "Standard Practice in Municipal Accounting and Financial Procedure." The report has already been published by the committee with recommendation for its adoption. Meeting with the association was the National Committee on Municipal Accounting, which proposes to undertake educational work looking toward a better understanding among business men of advantages of sound municipal accounting practices.

Concluding an investigation begun over a year ago because of allegations of irregularity

in numerous land purchases for city uses, Supreme Court Commissioner Warren Dixon, Jr., early in October handed in a report reputedly accusing three present and two past members of the Newark, New Jersey, city council with "criminal conspiracy," "raiding the city treasury," and "corrupt and illegal expenditure of money." Investigation was started by a committee of twenty-five taxpayers, headed by Charles Becker, long-time agitator for city manager government in Newark. The report of the special court commissioner was to be submitted at once to a special grand jury, the statute of limitations being nearly in force on some of the alleged charges.

#### PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

*Edited by George H. Hallett, Jr.*

**The P. R. Elections.**—On November 2nd, about the time this issue goes to press, proportional representation elections will be held in New York City, Cincinnati, Toledo, Hamilton (Ohio), and Boulder (Colorado), and a new P. R.-city manager charter will be adopted or rejected in the city of Yonkers, New York. The outcome of these important elections will be reported in this department next month.

These elections will also be reported and discussed at the annual conference on government of the National Municipal League at the Hotel Seneca, Rochester, New York, on the morning of November 20th. The morning discussions will be followed by a luncheon on P. R. addressed by Judge Samuel Seabury of New York, and John H. Humphreys, secretary of the P. R. Society of Great Britain, who is in this country to observe the election in New York.

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**A Philadelphian Visits Cincinnati.**—Dr. George Woodward of Philadelphia, a member of the Pennsylvania state senate and of the Philadelphia Charter Commission and sponsor of the Philadelphia optional P. R.-city manager bill in the Pennsylvania legislature of 1935, includes the following account in the October number of *The Pennsylvania Legislator*, which Dr. Woodward publishes "every so often" for free distribution to constituents

and others. The account was reproduced in full by the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*.

P. R. is not the Pennsylvania Railroad but a beginning of the end of unfairness in our representative government. The trouble is that our representative government doesn't represent fully or fairly the electorate. In the late unpleasantness of November 1936, the Republican party polled 40 per cent of the votes and gained only 20 per cent of the representation. Translated to the stratosphere of Washington, D. C., you will find one-fifth of the House and one-fifth of the Senate or 20 per cent to be Republican. If I belonged to the bright eyed majority I would not worry over this inconsistency. As I belong to the misunderstood, downtrodden minority, I believe that inconsistency is no jewel. P. R. is the cry of the minority.

Of all the wicked cities of our land of the free, Cincinnati, Ohio, is the least wicked. You may remember that Aristides the Just was so very just and went about Athens telling everyone how very just he was, that finally the Athenians grew sick of Aristides and banished him. That is the way I used to feel about Cincinnati when I was in the bad old majority. Adversity has changed all that. When I found myself attending a church convention in the "Queen City" I determined to attend also the administration of the perfect city government. As you know the leading lady and the leading man in this municipal drama are Proportional Representation and the City Manager. Which is the lady and which is the man doesn't matter. I naturally began at the city hall. This monumental building looks dark and brown and forbidding compared with our Philadelphia shining white marble monument of civic virtue. I was directed to room 150. There I found two attractive young women, one on the left, the other on the right. The left hand admitted to the city manager, Colonel Sherrill (\$25,000 a year); the right hand admitted to the mayor, Mr. Wilson (\$6,000 a year). The name Mayor Wilson sounded so familiar I asked to see him. The mayor had gone to Columbus to make an address and would not be in until Monday. I inspected the mayor's office and found it clean and sunny with rubber plants on the window sills. Indeed the office looked too orderly and too little used. I concluded that the business of governing 475,000 people does



not center in the mayor's office. The day before I had heard Mayor Wilson make a delightfully witty address of welcome to our church convention. The day before that I had seen him in the church parade and service in the stadium. That service must have taken his entire morning. It was easy therefore to commend this double headed administration, one the suaviter in modo, the other the fortiter in re. The mayor's secretary, Miss Sisson, didn't look very busy so I put her through a questionnaire. First about the P. R. ballot: she explained that there are nine members of council and at this election [November 2nd] there are forty candidates. The Charter Committee has endorsed nine of the forty. . . . Most people vote for nine names marking 1, 2, 3, 4, etc., in the order of preference. She showed me how she expects to vote. I must not betray her secret except to say her third choice is Charles P. Taft and her first is her boss Mayor Wilson.

Please understand that the suaviter in modo mayor is a councilman and is elected mayor by his eight colleagues. I do not know how he votes. In eleven years there have been only two mayors, Murray Seasongood and Russell Wilson. Each received \$5,000 as councilman and \$1,000 as mayor. The council also chooses a city manager. There have been two of these, Colonel Sherrill and Mr. Dykstra. Now Colonel Sherrill is back on the job but the council wrangled four months over it.

Instead of interviewing the city manager it seemed to me more intelligent to go into the market place and learn from some of the 475,000 how they felt about it. If there were a catch in it, if there were a low-down I would discover it. The market place looked too extensive for a one day search for truth. I therefore lunched at the busiest business men's lunching joint, the Hotel Netherlands-Plaza, which name doesn't seem to have a thing to do with the Roman farmer who founded Cincinnati. Near me was a table of eight busy business men laying wagers on tomorrow's football game. I gathered courage enough to introduce myself as a seeker after truth and just what did they think of the city manager? They were most courteous, gave up all profanity for the moment, and assured me unanimously that they were for it. There was no catch there. When I had

stimulated my nerve by more food I approached another table, looking a bit more select. They were 90 per cent for city manager form of government. One of them was the manager of the gilded hyphenated hotel. He said there was no gambling. If you had to gamble you had to cross the river into Kentucky. The only police scandal happened several years ago. The city manager and civil service commission did not stop or delay the indictment of the police grafters and they are now in jail. The manager referred me to Mr. Ireland in the Carew Tower who represents Mr. Emery who not only owns the hotel but also is head of the Charter Committee. Mr. Ireland answered a lot of questions. He also took me to the office of the Charter Campaign Committee. This committee was busy enlisting volunteers to distribute literature in every household. It is one thing to volunteer in the first flush of enthusiasm but quite another to volunteer in the eleventh year of the reform. I must therefore take off my hat in admiration of this sturdy enduring public spirit of the charter party of Cincinnati.

So far I have found no catch in this P. R.-city manager form of city government. It has succeeded so well and the city's financial standing has grown so steadily better that the Republican party which wouldn't believe a word of it at first is now very much on the defensive and has to admit itself at the wrong end of the stick. Cincinnati has had its reform pudding eleven years. If the proof of the pudding is in the eating, I would say that the people here look hale and hearty and happy and that there is no indigestion excepting among certain old political hacks who gave up learning anything new longer than eleven years ago.

#### GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION NOTES

*Edited by Robert M. Paige*

**Providence Governmental Research Bureau.**—The activities of the Providence Governmental Research Bureau in the past year have covered a variety of subjects.

Published just about twelve months ago was a comprehensive report analyzing the financial situation of Providence. Although Providence weathered the depression with less difficulty

than did most cities, it was nevertheless revealed that costs in Providence are high and that reforms need to be adopted if Providence is to avoid the pitfalls consequent to inefficient and loose financial practices. The study indicated particularly the need for: (1) a reduction in assessed valuations to a thoroughly defensible level; (2) financing relief costs from revenue; (3) a reorganization and consolidation of departments and a reduction in number of employees; (4) an adequate budgetary system.

A proposal for the adoption of a three thousand dollar homestead exemption measure in Rhode Island occasioned the compilation of a report showing the probable effect of such a measure. Included with the report was a statement giving as far as possible the experience of other states with similar provisions. The Rhode Island act was defeated in the 1937 session of the legislature.

Statistical statements were published during the year covering both city and state finances. A supplement issued in March made an analysis of state expenditures from 1933 through 1938. In April another supplement was issued comparing revenues and expenditures of the city of Providence since 1925.

At the present time an official state commission is studying the Rhode Island tax structure and will report its recommendations to the 1938 session of the legislature. The bureau has followed all of the deliberations of the commission and has coöperated in the compilation of factual data. A study just completed by the bureau compares revenues and expenditures of the six New England states, New Jersey, and Delaware.

Articles in the monthly bulletin have stressed the need for financial control and a more adequate budgetary procedure. During the last year the problem arising out of continual overdrafts and tax anticipation borrowing has become acute. Other bulletin articles have been written on garbage and refuse disposal, sewer rental charges, the Providence relief situation, personnel, purchasing, and other pertinent subjects.

Continued effort has been made to keep abreast of developments in city government and to advise with the public officials in devising methods and programs for meeting current problems.

At the present time work is being done on

resurveying the various departments and agencies of Providence city government in order to bring earlier studies up to date.

An analysis of the school teachers' salary schedule is also in process.

#### **Bureau of Governmental Research of the University of California at Los Angeles.**

By action of the Board of Regents, a Bureau of Governmental Research has recently been established at the University of California at Los Angeles for the purpose of making studies in the field of public administration. Special attention will be given to the governmental problems of the various southern California communities. A specialized library of governmental documents and reports will provide the basic materials for the research program.

In addition to the prosecution of original studies, the bureau will assist in making available to graduate and senior students the best sources of current information concerning governmental affairs. All facilities of the bureau will likewise be available for use by local public officials.

Professor Frank M. Stewart, chairman of the department of political science, will direct the activities of the newly created unit, assisted by a staff composed of Dr. George W. Bemis, research associate, and Miss Evelyn Huston, librarian. Graduate students of public administration will be employed to a limited extent in the work of the bureau, and National Youth Administration assistants will aid in the details of preparing various studies.

Publication, in mimeographed form, of several studies relating to the Los Angeles metropolitan region is contemplated in the near future. Among these are included monographs on public welfare administration, police administration, and the extent and cost of governmental services within certain unincorporated communities.

Headquarters of the Bureau of Governmental Research are located at 44 Library Building, University of California at Los Angeles, 405 Hilgard Avenue.

#### **California Taxpayers' Association.**

Among the research studies of government in California and its costs which California Taxpayers' Association has made since January 1, 1937, are the following:

During the current budget season, the as-



sociation analyzed the budgets of some thirty-two counties of the state, making recommendations and indicating findings with regard to the efficiency of county government. In order to carry on this work, the association opened four regional offices at San Jose, Fresno, Marysville, and Sacramento. The studies of these county budgets were made available to interested taxpayers throughout the state in time for the public hearings on county budgets.

In coöperation with the board of supervisors of Orange County, California, a study of salaries in the county, including classification and standardization, was made. This study was recently adopted by the county.

An efficiency survey of San Mateo County government is in process of completion. This study is being made for the board of supervisors and the county manager.

A study has been completed of the number of state boards, bureaus, divisions, institutions, etc., in the state government of California. There are 290 of these divisions.

A study of the expenditures of local governments in California showed that the local governments spend approximately \$1,000,000 a day. Of the \$370,183,809 spent in 1934-35 by local governments, 34.46 per cent went for local education, 14.92 per cent for bond interest and redemption, 13.80 per cent for charities and corrections, 12.33 per cent for protection to persons and property, 9.52 per cent for highways, 7.75 per cent for general government, 2.94 per cent for health and sanitation, 2.24 per cent for recreation, and 2.04 per cent for miscellaneous. The per capita average expenditure of the local governments for the entire state was \$58.13.

A study of the expenditures for California schools showed that the 1936 expenditure of \$156,798,359 for the schools has been exceeded only twice in previous years. The total for 1930 was about \$160,000,000 and the all-time high was \$164,000,000 for 1931. Average school district expenditures per pupil in average daily attendance in the elementary schools were \$126.07 in 1930-31, went to a low of \$98.02 in 1933-34, and were \$123.27 in 1935-36; high school expenditures were an average of \$249.28 per pupil in 1930-31, \$162.44 in 1933-34, and \$198.85 in 1935-36, the study showed.

A study of the trend of local tax levies on property during the years 1933 to 1937 showed the effect of the change in the tax system of

California. This study of thirty-two counties, covering 80 per cent of the entire valuation of the state, during the five-year period, shows sharp increases in taxes during the last two years. The shift of a large part of school support from local to state taxation in 1933-34 afforded material relief to real property for the time being, the study reveals, although there is a definite tendency for school district tax demands to expand, thereby absorbing the relief. In addition, the return of operative property to local tax rolls, together with the state-wide equalization of values, appears to have encouraged larger tax levies instead of spreading the levies thinner, as had been hoped.

A history of constitutional debt limitation in California, from the first state constitution ratified in 1849 through the constitution of 1879 and subsequent amendments, has been completed.

An analysis of the debt burden in Imperial County, California, including that of the county, the Imperial irrigation district, six municipalities, five high school districts, twenty-one elementary school districts, and one sanitary district, showed a total indebtedness of \$47,141,675 outstanding at July 1, 1936, or an average debt burden per capita in the county of \$619.82.

Costs of the 180 largest elementary school districts and the 160 largest high school districts in California were studied, facts being presented as to the class of school, average daily attendance, and expenditures per pupil in average daily attendance for teachers' salaries, general expense, transportation, capital outlay, interest, total excluding bond redemption, and bond redemption, for each of these school districts.

Total monthly welfare expenditures and total welfare cases in California, for the month of March 1937, for each of the fifty-eight California counties, including joint state and county aid for aged, blind, and orphans, county aid for outside relief and in institutions, and unemployment relief under the SERA and WPA, were compiled and made available to the public.

A survey of what a county budget should contain, what the public can expect of a county budget, and how county officials can organize that document so that the public will understand what it is all about was presented.

An analysis was made of California's \$531,000,000 state budget and the state's fiscal

program, including a statement of state expenditures and state revenues for the biennium 1937-39.

California's tax system as at September 1, 1937, and its operation, were described briefly.

Per capita expenditures, based on estimates of population made by California Taxpayers' Association, for county functions in the fifty-eight counties of the state, for general government, protection to persons and property, health and sanitation, highways and bridges, recreation, charities, miscellaneous, education, debt payments, and the total of these, were calculated and the information made available to the people of the state through the newspapers.

Total and per capita bonded debt in the counties for county, school districts, special districts, and municipalities, were calculated.

Bonded debt of the 280 cities of the state, including total amount and amount per capita, were calculated.

A study of the uses for population estimates was made.

A study of local tax levies on property in California counties has been started.

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#### **Toronto Bureau of Municipal Research.**—

During 1937 the activities of the bureau have been largely confined to study of current problems such as police administration, the tax burden on real property, the reduction of current expenditures through the annual budget of current expenditures, the financing of direct relief, housing, zoning and town planning, the relation of provincial to municipal finance, etc. Two "briefs," two "open letters," and five "white papers" have been issued since the beginning of the year.

The bureau also coöperated with the Board of Trade in the preparation of editorial and bulletin material for its journal.

HORACE L. BRITAIN,  
*Managing Director*

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#### **Citizens' Research Institute of Canada.**—

During 1937 the institute has carried on its study of taxation, public revenues, debt, etc., in the nine provinces of the dominion and their municipalities in the series, "A Nationwide Plan of Taxation for Canada." Reports on Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia were completed and published. With British Columbia, Alberta, and Manitoba com-

pleted in 1936, there remains for study and report only Ontario, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island.

The institute has coöperated since October 1936 with groups of citizens in Montreal and Toronto, who have supplied the funds, in a special study of taxation in Canada in preparation for representation to the recently appointed dominion royal commission on federal-provincial relations. The study is being conducted in the institute office by a director of survey appointed for the purpose.

The assistant director, J. E. Howes, who in recent years has specialized in assessment methods, has completed his work as a member of the commission appointed by the York County council to equalize county assessments. At the request of the city council he has also supervised a reassessment of real property in the city of Oshawa. A series of general articles on assessment of real property for taxation purposes embodying the results of the institute's experience in this field will shortly be published, first in bulletin and then in pamphlet form.

The institute has just issued to the subscribers to its financial statistics—*Canadian Municipalities*—a supplement on municipal tax collections during the first eight months of 1937 compared with the similar period in 1936.

HORACE L. BRITAIN, *Director*

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#### **Bureau of Public Administration at the University of Virginia.**—

The bureau, which was established as a collaborative agency for governmental research by the League of Virginia Municipalities and the university's Institute for Research in the Social Sciences in 1931, was reorganized in 1936 as an independent and coördinate agency, under the control of the president of the university and a council consisting of the governor of Virginia, the secretary of the League of Virginia Municipalities, the consultant-director of the state planning board, the chairman of the county government commission, the director of the division of statutory research and drafting, and the chairman of the legislative advisory council. At the same time, the basic objectives of the bureau were subjected to exhaustive analysis and redefinition.

At the present time the bureau serves the people of the commonwealth in a three-fold capacity: (1) through its council it provides the machinery for the coöperative integration

of the research work of the major official and semi-official planning and advisory agencies of the state; (2) it seeks to promote and facilitate coöperation between academic researchers and administrators and planners in the investigation of important public problems in Virginia; (3) it is charged with the execution of a research program formulated in consultation with the council and in contemplation of the activities and programs of agencies represented in the council as well as the researches in progress in the universities and colleges and elsewhere in the state.

Miscellaneous functions of the bureau involve the instruction of undergraduate and graduate students in public administration at the University of Virginia, administration of the public administration library of the university, serving as secretariat for the university committee on public service training, etc.

During the past year the bureau has published *Municipal Ownership of Electric Undertakings in Virginia*, by Egger and Gates, and *Training for Public Service in Virginia*, by Egger, Baumes, and Uhl. In process of publication are: *Who's Who in Public Administration Research in Virginia*, by Egger; *The Areal Problem in Virginia Rural Administration*, by Uhl, Shea, and Egger; and *The Problem of Governmental Integration in Virginia Metropolitan Areas*, by Egger, Uhl, and Shea. Volume I of the bureau's fortnightly *White Paper*, which is published from October through May, was also concluded during the past year and the first issue of Volume II has just appeared. This bulletin is designed to provide information concerning research in progress throughout the state, to indicate the directions and objectives of such research, and to keep the body of researchers in public administration and closely allied fields, numbering about 225, *au courant* with developments throughout the commonwealth. By the systematic presentation of such information, the bureau hopes to prepare the ground for an ultimately integrated program which will permit the more effective contribution of all agencies of investigation and research to the scientific study of public administration in Virginia.

The bureau has also assisted in the development of the University of Virginia's pre-entry training program which went into operation with the beginning of the current academic year. This program represents an integration,

by major public service functions, of relevant instructional facilities in the several faculties and professional schools of the university, co-ordinated in the form of three-year curricula leading to an M.A. or M.S. in public administration. The committee on public service training is at present engaged in refining certain of the established curricula and in working out an effective program of apprenticeship and governmental contact for the students registered in the several curricula. Present registration in the curricula, which were not completed until late spring, numbers about twelve.

During the summer the director of the bureau was absent for ten weeks in Europe as Spelman fund fellow in public administration, and had the opportunity to assist in the establishment of the Brussels Public Administration Center as well as to attend the conferences of the International Union of Local Authorities, International Institute of Administrative Sciences, International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, and the International Housing Association in Paris during July.

ROWLAND EGGER, *Director*

**Department of Investigation of the City of Minneapolis.**—A significant survey and report was made by the department of investigation this year, at the request of the city council, on a proposal of fire and police department employees that salaries be increased by a flat twenty dollars per month in all grades and classifications.

The study on this subject included: (1) analysis of cost of living with relation to salary changes of firemen and policemen from 1913 to 1937; (2) comparisons of salaries and financial burdens with other cities; (3) analysis of the condition in and prospects for the funds out of which such salary demands would have to be met; and (4) brief summary of working conditions and service needs of fire and police departments of Minneapolis which might take priority over salary increases, if funds were available.

The total added burden proposed in the salary request would have amounted to more than \$240,000 per year. As a result of the study and report submitted to the city council, action was deferred until such time as the financial condition of the city permitted and adequate sources of revenue materialized



sufficiently to assure continuation of any salary plan which might be adopted.

NATHAN HARRIS, *Utilities Engineer*

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#### **Taxpayers Association of New Mexico.—**

During the last six months the work of the Taxpayers Association of New Mexico has been devoted largely to assisting in the preparation of county, city, town, village, and school district budgets. These budgets are prepared under the supervision of the state tax commission and the state educational budget auditor. Representatives of the association have visited the various tax and spending units in the state to attend the hearings and to represent the taxpayers. This has been the principal work of the Taxpayers Association for

twenty years. After budgets have been prepared in the various counties, cities, and communities, they are brought to Santa Fe and are subject to review by the state tax commission. Representatives of the Taxpayers Association are permitted to attend the hearings before the tax commission and to assist in the determination of property tax levies necessary to be levied, the proceeds of which, with other available revenue, are used to meet the budgets of the various units for the present fiscal year, which began July 1, 1937.

The Taxpayers Association has also been active in a survey of fire insurance on public buildings, and of the administration of the justice of the peace courts in the various precincts of the state.

RUPERT F. ASPLUND, *Director*

#### **COUNTING TWO MILLION P. R. VOTES**

(Continued from page 512)

venember 2, 1937," "City of New York," "New York County," "Twentieth Election District," and "Second Assembly District." He will probably never know that not even "General Election" has a chance of winning.

No matter how long it takes, the results in New York City should be well worth the wait. For the first time in history, the customary overwhelming Tammany majority in the municipal assembly, gained by hook or crook, may turn out to be a pallid minority. Political commentators and printing press prophets have been chanting the funeral dirge over Tammany Hall ever since the triumph of the good government forces in the re-election of Fiorello LaGuardia as mayor of the country's largest city. But even the selection of the "little flower" may run second in history's verdict of important events to the change brought about by the selec-

tion of the members of New York's new city council by proportional representation.

For Tammany's power over New York has lain in its control of minority groups under its own peculiar form of representation—or misrepresentation, if you will. When these groups through P. R. may find their own way to representation, the benevolent services of "the Hall" will lose their appeal.

The nation should watch this New York innovation with keen interest. It is, indeed, attracting the attention of students of government throughout the world. Among others, John H. Humphreys, outstanding British authority on P. R., made a special trip from England to observe the fascinating alchemy of this new process at work. Nowhere in the world is there such a heterogeneous population as in New York. If "P. R." lives up to the expectations of its proponents, the outcome will hold a lesson for cities and states everywhere.



## RECENT BOOKS REVIEWED

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EDITED BY ELSIE S. PARKER

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**Committees in Organisation.** By L. Urwick. (Reprinted from the *British Management Review*.) London, Management Journals, Ltd. 1937. 48 pp.

In 1925 an American expert in the management of committees, Edward E. Hunt, published the rules of the committee "game" in his "Conferences, Committees, Conventions and How to Run Them." This eminently wise and practical volume is now supplemented by an equally wise and somewhat less pragmatic analysis of committees by an English expert in committee work, the one-time director of the International Institute of Scientific Management at Geneva.

Urwick's experience and reflection make him no friend of the committee form of organization. Committee failures, he finds, are due principally to the failure to recognize that "the only reason for appointing a conjoint body for any purpose, rather than an individual, is that it should think and act conjointly." Despite the fact that they lead to irresponsibility, excessive cost, and bad employment practices, "there appears to be an irresistible logic" leading to their "inevitable proliferation." Hunt reckoned at least ten thousand important conferences in the United States of America yearly—before the New Deal! How many unimportant committees meet staggers the imagination.

Among the eight "elementary" activities of any organization, as isolated by Urwick—initiation, investigation, direction, organization, provision (of personnel and material), execution, control, and communication—the author gives 50 per cent efficiency to the committee only in the function of control; in the "specific" activities of coordination the committee ranks equally well; only in "juris-

dition" (determination) does he grant it the possibility of complete success.

The analysis of different types of situations in which action is required forms by no means the least valuable although an incidental part of this brochure. It deserves to be read by students of administration as well as by members of committees—a substantial audience.

LEONARD D. WHITE

University of Chicago

**Machine Politics: Chicago Model.** By Harold F. Gosnell. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1937. xx, 229 pp. \$2.50.

The author, who will be remembered by many for his several other excellent contributions to literature on the practical political field, draws a rather disheartening picture of the situation in the second largest city of the United States. With fine discernment, he analyzes the revolutionary changes which have taken place in Chicago politics during the depression; but he is forced to conclude that the changes simply brought another group of spoilsmen into control.

The fundamental character of the party system, Dr. Gosnell finds, has remained the same, the only apparent difference being that the Democrats now in power concentrate more on the manipulation of patronage from the national government than on the spoils formerly obtained purely locally.

The book is aptly described in a foreword by William Fielding Ogburn as "something new in the study of politics." It is new because it brings to political science the whole battery of scientific techniques of modern social science.

He adds, "That he knows his data, as well

as his method, is evident from his apparent wide acquaintance with Chicago political leaders, big and little, with ward boundaries, locales of operation, and services of precinct captains and ward bosses. . . . Perhaps Dr. Gosnell's work is a signal for a general forward movement which is surely inevitable some time in the distinguished field of political science."

The authoritative completeness of the volume is enhanced by the maps showing changing ward lines, results of elections in certain areas, nationality and racial groups, etc., and charts, diagrams, and tables analyzing and comparing relationships, social forces, and other elements.

While the book is packed with human interest, making it attractive and worthwhile for the layman, it cannot help but be challenging to the scientist. An appendix provides exhaustive analyses of voting behavior and the influence of the press, forms used in research work, factorial analysis, formulas and equations, and a detailed bibliography.

Despite the obvious failure of the depression to eliminate the spoils tradition in the city hall, Dr. Gosnell has discovered many favorable elements in what took place there from 1930 to 1937, and he is far from granting that political corruption is inevitable in Chicago or in any other large city. To those voters in Chicago, or any other politically corrupt cities who are interested, he points the way.

ALFRED WILLOUGHBY

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**The National Debt and Government Credit.** By Paul W. Stewart and Rufus S. Tucker. New York, Twentieth Century Fund, Inc., 1937. xvii, 171 pp. \$1.75.

In this small volume, the Twentieth Century Fund has provided an admirable summary of the changes which have occurred in the public debt in recent years, particularly from 1930 to the present. The authors concentrate their attention upon the effects of these changes upon government credit. In order to accomplish this purpose, it was necessary to attempt a definition of government credit and to investigate the connections between government financial policies and credit. Some historical and comparative analysis of the debt is also included.

The main conclusion of the authors is that the credit of the federal government is sound

in spite of the great size of its debt. "Furthermore, the ability of the federal government to market its obligations at low interest rates and to refund old issues reveals no certain signs of any immediate government debt-credit crisis in the United States. However, the authors hasten to warn the reader that the debt is potentially inflationary, that long continued unbalanced budgets will result in undue credit expansion, and that the large volume of the debt involves a burdensome debt service which reduces the amount of tax receipts available for other expenditures. The authors do not deal with the manner in which the budget should be balanced and avoid taking a position in favor of either reduced expenditures or higher taxation.

An interesting attempt is made to forecast the future size of the federal debt. Three alternative assumptions are used: (1) that business conditions and national income in the 1940's will repeat the depressed conditions of the 1930's, (2) that they will equal those of the 1920's, and (3) that they will reach a still higher level of activity and income than in the 1920's. Professor Shoup's median estimates of expenditures and tax receipts in 1940 are used as the basis of these prognostications. As a result it is estimated that the federal debt would be approximately fifty billions in the 1940's under the most pessimistic assumption and about thirty-one billions under the most optimistic assumption. The study ends with a program of action which emphasizes the need for debt retirement in order to restore the reservoir of public credit.

Although this study is valuable as a statistical review, it leaves much to be desired as a theoretical analysis of government credit. It seems unduly narrow in scope, since it defines credit, in the traditional manner, as confidence in the ability and willingness of the borrower to pay interest and principal when due. This decidedly psychological approach makes it almost impossible to devise any method of measurement of the subject studied. Credit rests upon reputation; reputation is a statistically unmanageable concept. The statistical data which enrich this study, therefore, seem to the reviewer peculiarly unrelated to the central subjects of the investigation.

WILLIAM WITHERS

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**The Thorny Question of Personnel.** By Princeton Local Government Survey. Princeton, New Jersey, 1937. 47 pp.

This is the second of the "Pocket Report Series" published by the Princeton Local Government Survey, of which Harold W. Dodds, president of Princeton University, is chairman, and Harley L. Lutz, William S. Carpenter, and John F. Sly (secretary) are members. The members of the survey are to be commended for the simplicity and conciseness with which they have set forth "the PICTURE, the PROCESS, and the PROBLEM" of local government personnel in New Jersey. By an ingenious use of type—bold faced and otherwise—well spaced and margined, the booklet presents an attractive piece of literature which will be readily perused by the average New Jersey citizen as well as the professor of political science and the local government official.

\*

**The Reorganization and Consolidation of State Administration in Louisiana.** By Bureau of Government Research of Louisiana State University. Baton-Rouge, Louisiana State University, 1937. 279 pp.

The reorganization and consolidation of state administration is the first survey project of the newly established Bureau of Government Research. The book opens with a review of state administration throughout the country, dwelling especially on those states whose government has been reorganized and consolidated. It then takes up state administration in Louisiana, listing and describing the powers and duties of the 174 offices, boards, and commissions which constitute the executive and administrative system of the state.

Reorganization and consolidation of like agencies are strongly recommended. All legislation affecting the administrative system should be repealed and a single administrative code enacted in place of the multitude of statutes heretofore forming its basis. Other recommendations include the appointment by the governor, with the advice of the senate, of directors of departments, bureau chiefs, and the members of boards and commissions whose terms coincide with his own. All other state employees should be under a state civil service system, appointed in accordance with merit, with permanent tenure

of office, adequate compensation, and a reasonable retirement and pension fund.

Two possible plans are outlined in some detail—the first statutory only, the second both constitutional and statutory.

\*

**Studies in Massachusetts Town Finance.** By Eugene E. Oakes. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1937. 237 pp. \$2.50.

This volume contains a series of case studies dealing with certain episodes in the financial history of a group of small Massachusetts towns. Although a system of counties has been superimposed, the towns have retained most of the important local government functions. They are responsible for schools, parks, and libraries and for the relief of the poor and have power to inaugurate various services in the interests of public health. They may furnish local roads, fire and police protection, and have authority to carry out drainage projects, construct sewers, etc.—all of which makes them important as units of government. The towns considered were chosen not because of any historical interest they might possess but because they seemed to throw light upon certain important principles of public finance. They include Hopedale, Wellesley, Maynard, Millville, Adams, Belmont, Hopkinton, Florida, and Somerset.

The studies bring to light two matters that are often overlooked: the unfavorable financial effect that a large number of people who pay only the nominal tax on polls may exert upon the town meetings which they attend and the effect which the presence of despotic elements existing within the framework of the nominal democracy of the New England town meeting has upon the financial policies of the town.

\*

**Municipal Index and Atlas.** Edited by American City Magazine Corporation. New York, 1937. 631 pp. \$5.00.

In issuing this 1937 edition of the *Municipal Index and Atlas*, the *American City Magazine* has again performed a most valuable service to local government officials and others interested in the improvement of city and county government. The *Index* contains maps of all the states together with lists of their cities, a directory of municipal officials,



valuable information on streets and highways, water supply, sewage and garbage disposal, light and power, etc. For the first time it carries a compilation of municipal electric utility data, including earnings. A "30-Section Bookshelf for the City Hall," including titles on planning, city management, civil service, counties, finance and taxation, housing, purchasing, etc., is also included.

\*

**Public Welfare Board and Committee Relationships.** By R. Clyde White. Chicago, Illinois, American Public Welfare Association, 1937. 23 pp. Thirty-five cents.

Citizen participation in public welfare administration is achieved through boards and committees but there is no fixed pattern by which such groups can carry on their activities with the official staff. Each such board or committee must experiment and explore and discover the practical ways of developing and carrying on its duties for itself. The author believes that citizen boards and committees have positive functions to perform which are vital to efficient service and sound public policy. He helps to meet their problems by setting forth the methods by which citizen participation in public welfare service can be made most effective. The study covers types of welfare boards and committees, organization, and the relations of the board or committee with the public welfare director and the public.

\*

**Government in Kentucky Cities.** By John W. Manning. Lexington, Kentucky, Bureau of Government Research of University of Kentucky (Local Government Study No. 3), 1937. 24 pp. mimeo.

The purpose of this study is to give a brief description and analysis of the framework of government as set up in the various classes of Kentucky cities. It comprises a discussion of the urban and rural population of Kentucky, forms of city government in use, findings based on an examination of the constitution and statutes of the state, and recommendation of a greater degree of home rule and the lifting of statutory restrictions. The study includes a number of excellent charts setting forth the several types of government used in the cities of the different classes.

**Minnesota Year Book, 1937.** By League of Minnesota Municipalities. Minneapolis, 1937. 385 pp. \$5.00.

For the eighth year the League of Minnesota Municipalities, in cooperation with the Municipal Reference Bureau of the University of Minnesota, has performed the very useful service of publishing factual data regarding state and local government in Minnesota. The task of the research worker in local government would be immeasurably lightened were such a volume to be compiled for every state.

Statistics on assessed valuations, taxes, tax rates, and indebtedness are presented, as formerly, in tabular form. Other material includes a utility rate section, directory of officials, and miscellaneous statistical information on some phases of state government, county and school district finances, and on municipal service relating to overhead organization, libraries, water works, fire losses, etc. In many cases the statistics are presented in comparative form for several years back. A brief analysis of 1937 legislation is also included.

\*

**The Official Publications of American Counties.** By James Goodwin Hodgson. Fort Collins, Colorado, 1937. 594 pp. mimeo. \$5.00. (Apply to author.)

The author has attempted here, with splendid results, to assemble in one volume the official publications of county governments throughout the country. The book contains more than five thousand entries, listed by states subdivided into counties.

As stated in the preface, it has not been possible, of course, to obtain the titles of all publications on county government. Since the titles were gathered from lists furnished by libraries throughout the country, it is obvious that some material may have been missed. Furthermore, as the author points out, the volume is limited to official publications of the counties themselves. Material on county government has been issued by state officials and commissions and under private auspices which has never been gathered together. This is a far more complete bibliography on county publications, however, than has thus far been issued, and should prove most valuable to students of county government.

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NATIONAL MUNICIPAL LEAGUE



# THE LEAGUE'S BUSINESS

**The League's Annual Meeting.**—Over five hundred leaders in the field of government, interested laymen, and students attended the League's Forty-third Annual Conference on Government at Rochester last month. Group sessions on county government, finance, housing, education, metropolitan areas, tax limitation, personnel, law enforcement, etc., had capacity audiences.

The sessions on relief, addressed by William Hodson, Commissioner of Public Welfare in New York City; Dorothy C. Kahn, director of the Philadelphia County Relief Board; Dr. Evelyn Burns of Columbia University, and other experts in the relief field, also attracted large numbers of interested persons. The REVIEW plans to carry the addresses and reports given at these sessions in its January issue.

Dr. Dodds, the League's outgoing president, and Dr. Dykstra, its newly elected head, shared honors at the League's banquet, presided over by Marion B. Folsom, president of the Rochester Chamber of Commerce. Dr. Dodds made a plea for a return to old-fashioned democracy. He emphasized the fact that there is danger that modern methods of living may stifle adequate social living. "Is there not," he asked, "a whole series of such human needs which modern life, with its allegiance to bigness and its mammoth scale organization is failing to provide for?" Discussing the responsibility of the community, acting in a voluntary capacity, President Dodds declared that: "Unless we are prepared to accept as desirable the corporative state, which I trust we never shall, where each individual is assigned a particular function and station in life, we must restore to society opportunities for voluntary association where the instinct to want to be a neighbor and to have neighbors will be gratified."

Dr. Dykstra took as his title "Implementing Democracy." In the course of his address he said: "In the last analysis our success or failure in this government enterprise depends upon the capacity and intelligence of the men and women who make up our public personnel. Popular distempers all over the world have thrown the moral imperative of democracy overboard and made their appeal to physical force and passion. Whether such movements win recruits in growing numbers depends upon our ability to meet the problem of keeping democratic institutions alive and vigorous. To do this, responsible instruments of effective democratic action will have to be developed if Americans are to continue to believe in representative governments."

The sessions on proportional representation also proved to be of much interest because of its recent use in New York City for the election of council under the city's new charter. Judge Seabury's address on the subject will be found elsewhere in this issue.

At the annual business meeting of the League the slate of officers presented by the nominating committee as reported in last month's issue of the REVIEW, with the additional nomination of Harold W. Dodds as a member of the council, was duly elected.

The Rochester local committee on arrangements, led by Mr. Folsom as chairman and Harold W. Sanford of the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle* as vice-chairman, is to be congratulated on the efficiency with which the local arrangements were handled. Following are some of the comments on the sessions which have already been received:

I congratulate you most warmly upon the Rochester conference of the National Municipal League. What a number of live persons you have in different centres in the United States giving themselves to the problems of government! Their work will be of the utmost value to democracy and to mankind. JOHN H. HUMPHREYS, Secretary, British Proportional Representation Society.

The convention in my judgment was again a great success. I personally derived a great deal of benefit from it, my only regret being that I could not spend more time there. HOMER BROWNING, Manager, Governmental and Municipal Securities Department, Buffalo Marine Trust Company.

I feel that you and your associates deserve a great deal of credit for the way in which you handled the entire affair. It was a credit to good organization behind the scenes. ALLEN H. SEED, JR., Executive Secretary, Toledo City Manager League.

I was greatly interested in the meetings I attended. I had no idea of the extent of your activity, and I came away with a much broadened viewpoint. W. HOWARD WRIGHT, Schenectady Varnish Company.

HOWARD P. JONES, *Secretary*